

The gray dawn arrived late, later than it did in the warm months. The sun rises lazily, later than it usually would and unwillingly cast only some of the warmth it was capable of casting. But the first of this cool month is not so cold, for it reminds the Nigerians, the Cypriots and the Tuvaluans of the great deeds they performed, and how successful they were. For on the first of this cool month, they breathed the first cool air of freedom. The second day gets cooler, with the tips of the lush green leaves beginning to show little signs of yellowing and the air having a comfortable feel, the feel of a cool winter on its way. This bright day, I call it bright because the sun still comes out relatively early, is also bright for the people who cherish peace, for it is the day the loving Bapu was born. And here and there pass extraordinary days, the memories of which some of us hold dear. And the days pass on, each getting cooler than the last, but even more pleasant.

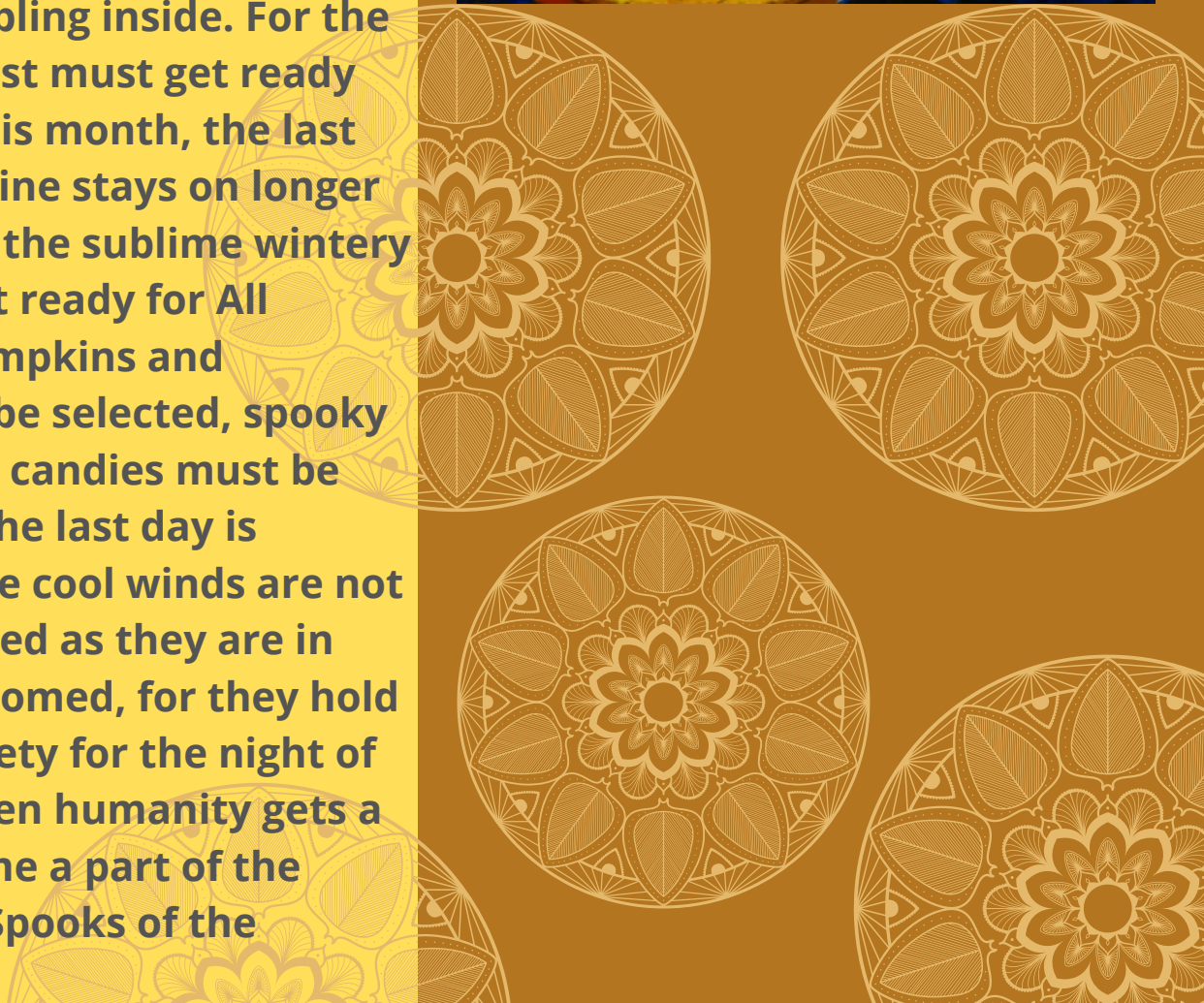


**A WALK
THROUGH
OCTOBER
WRITTEN BY
SAMEEHA NOOR-
10D**

**ILLUSTRATION
BY PRAKRITI
CHAKRAVARTY**

The leaves finally show discoloration, some of them become the dull yellow that one sees in turmeric when it is crushed, while others are tinged with orange, a dull brownish tinge which tells us that it is only in dullness that brightness can be distinguished. The feel in the air gets stronger, as though it holds a promise. Though the days keep getting shorter, and the night is keen to ascend on to earth, shadowing humanity in darkness, it gives a promise of things bright and gay.

By the middle of the month, the dull feeling is only on the outside, for nothing can suppress the wonderful excitement bubbling inside. For the beings in the west must get ready for the last of this month, the last day when sunshine stays on longer than it would in the sublime wintery days, as they get ready for All Hallows Eve. Pumpkins and costumes must be selected, spooky decorations and candies must be purchased, for the last day is approaching. The cool winds are not ignored or disliked as they are in winter, but welcomed, for they hold a promise of gaiety for the night of the last day, when humanity gets a chance to become a part of the unknown, the "Spooks of the Underworld."

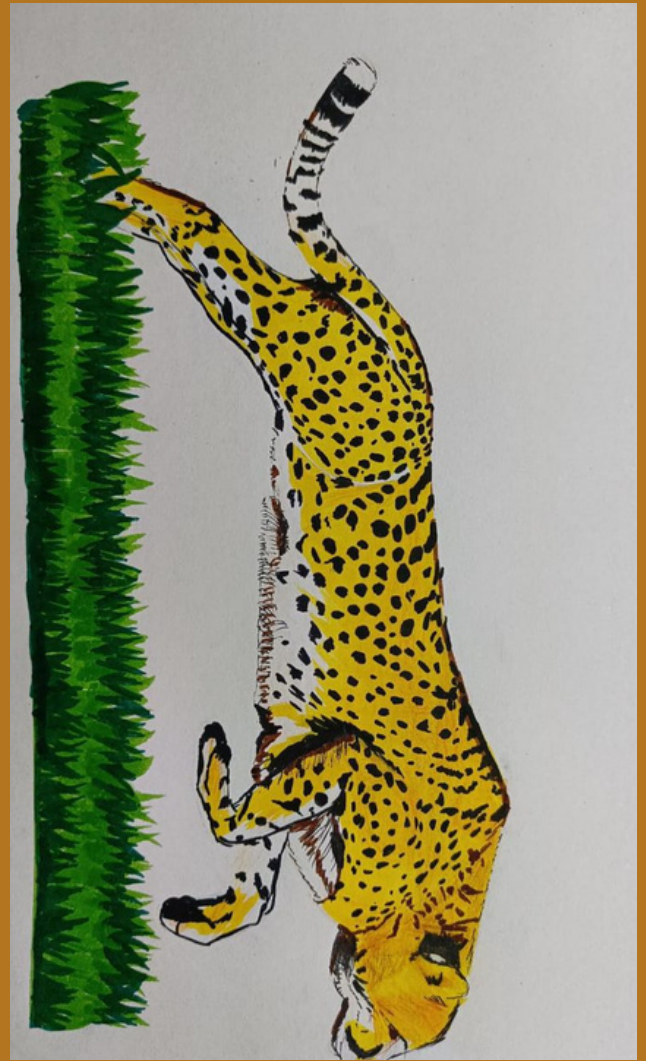


For the beings in the east, a fortnight of merriment approaches, lighting smiles on faces when they give it a thought, for there is no chance of sadness in this period of joy. New clothes, gifts and knick-knacks are to be bought, for this time, though cool in weather, is warm in hearts, and the warmth can be displayed by bright trinkets and exuberant smiles. And in this period, the good folk are so engaged in visiting sanctums and enjoying the company of those they revere, that they don't get the chance to draw a single breath of despair.

Living in October is what one does, but a walk through it is recommended, for at no other time do such feelings germinate. It is an amalgamation of the dry autumn winds, the falling of the leaves, the scents and tastes of joy. It signals the coming of winter, which has its own glamour. Such is the feel of this phase, it reawakens the sleeping hearts and revives the slumbering souls. The brightness, the colours, the lights and the feel, is necessary for the heart to heal.

The cheetah runs through the
bright night,
New freedom from its cage.
The leash has been cut once
and for all,
A new day to finally celebrate.
The fire-crackers of new
contentment, Loved ones
gather to be finally reunited.
It's back to its home with its
friends,
Ready to celebrate a new day
ahead.
A spark ignites within and out,
What a beautiful sight to see!
It roars with joy and delight,
A celebration worth being
acknowledged.
A night filled with the music of
love,
"Could it be interrupted?"
Then I finally realised,
A celebration comes only once
a year.

BY ARATRIKA BASU 7D



**THE NEW
FESTIVAL
WRITTEN BY
ARATRIKA
BASU-7D**

**ILLUSTRATION
BY SOMYA
DAGA-11C**

She woke up! With her head throbbing in pain and heart wounded with lies, she finally woke up. The cold walls of the basement accompanied by dust and a musty smell made her groan out loud. Slowly getting up from the cold floor in her flimsy grey dress she gulped, surrounded by boxes and old furniture she realised she was locked. Not for hours but for days without food, water or even warmth. A small window was the only source of light in the basement which had been purposely shut, because she was there. The dusty little mirror in front of her just added to the grief as she took in her appearance, the girl who once held red roses had red bruised arms, cuts on her face and pale skin. Suddenly, she heard the faint sound of drums. Curiosity got the better of her as she dragged her sore body towards the window and looked out. The whole city seemed illuminated as it was bathed in light, women adorned themselves in beautiful sarees and the air was thick with the sound of joy. The delicious smell of food made her stomach growl and warm tears rolled down her cheeks. She had to get out before her aunt came back in and saw her. The basement door suddenly opened and a child looked at her with pity, she ran. When she walked on the street she realised it was a celebration! People were celebrating a goddess called Durga who had defeated evil and had come to the mortal world for ten days.



**A TEAR OF JOY
WRITTEN BY
OISHI DAS-10D**

**ILLUSTRATION
BY LIPIKA
JHUNJHUNWALA**

An old lady looked at the girl passing by and offered her something to eat, touched by her kindness the wounded girl cried. The woman offered a beautiful saree and wiped her stray tears away, it was dussehra and nobody cried that day. The girl dressed in her new attire stepped out and witnessed the city decked up in finery, it seemed as if people never slept these ten days, the whole atmosphere was joyful and smiles never left anyone's face. A child held her hand and dragged her towards a pandal where she saw the most beautiful deity ever, goddess Durga made her feel empowered and at peace. She danced with the women and laughed heartily with the children, for the first time in what felt like forever, she felt accepted and warm. This city dawned with lights and festivities made her feel like she was home. She smiled and a tear rolled down her cheek, this time it was a tear of joy. She felt happy and accepted as festivals knew no borders, it did not care whether she was wounded. They just provide comfort and joy to people as festivals are without borders.

