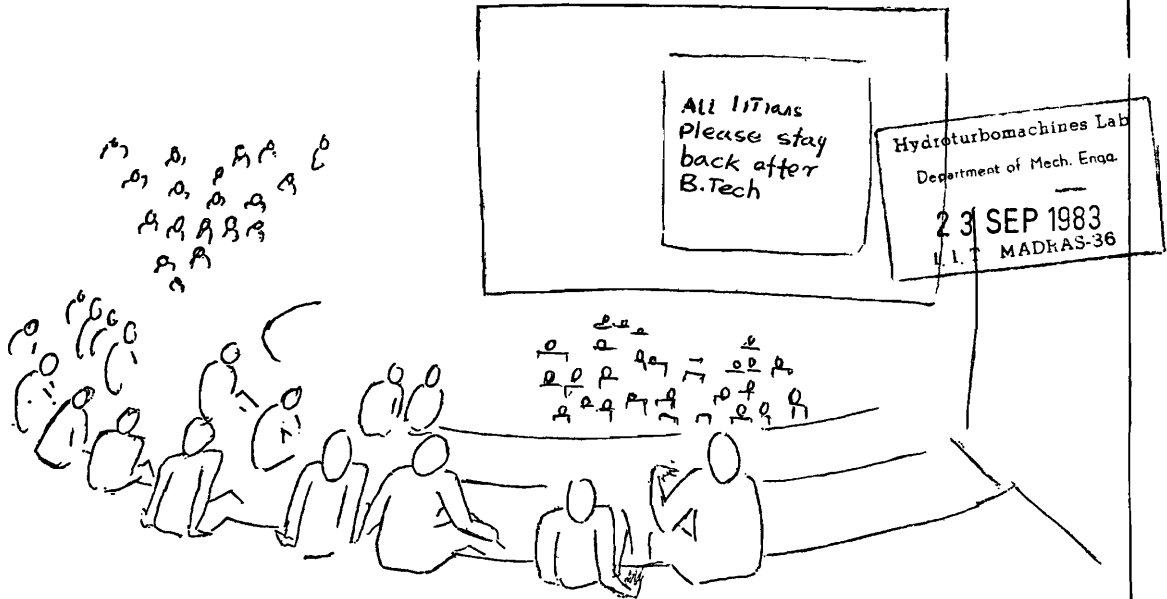


Campatimes

SEPT '83



POST BOX

Ref: OAT slide on 13th August

Dear Sirs,

As mentioned in the slide - "Write to Campastimes for Fffifty bucks", we are doing the same.

Hoping you would oblige us immediately.

Thanking you,

Anirudh & Lakshman
(322 & 325 SARAS)

Eds: Sssorry, try again.
* * *

Either C.V.Narasimhan was downright unpatriotic or he was a lickspittle of the British.

C.V.N's views on the IAS Officers of today are curious. "Many of the IAS Officers have found that the way to get

on is by being very friendly with Ministers and doing their bidding. Narasimhan also had no qualms in dealing with freedom fighters whom he prefers to categorize as 'rioteers'. I would advise him to see 'Gandhi'.

R.Srinivasan
SARAS

* * *

Dear Eds,

Your issue is welcome. The human interest angle you seem to have adopted is in good taste. I agree with the author of 'Causerie', that the rapid deforestation going on around us is too serious a matter to be taken lightly.

G.V.Suresh.

EDITORS: Sriram.R.
339, Ganga

Kumaran Sathasivam
307, Saraswathi

Srivatsan.R
104, Narmada

Publisher : Prof. Klaus Schleusener
Production Editor : Murali.V.
Cover Design : Joseph Joy.

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EDITORIAL

'Murder by the Oxidation Pond!', 'Terrorists hijack 'Everest'!', 'The scandalous escapades of Dr.X', 'Our unbiased, honest student secretaries': these are some of the many headings that the Editors of Campustimes could not use. But the confluence of three minds a week back, did throw up some spicy material: interesting events that one could chew on with relish.

We speak of the time when Madras was rocked by political demonstrations and protest rallies and we IITians...(yawn!) slumbered on peacefully; of our coy President G.Z.S who has been dodging the convo' repeatedly - postponemnt has already made it only half as much fun, the other half having already left for the U.S; of the sportfest which raised clouds of dust and lusty cheering on the fields and courts. But we choose to elaborate on something much more interesting. of what you can expect in this issue and of our future plans.

The increasing length & breadth of IITian creativity has obliged us to augment the size of our magazine. We are sure the change will elicit your 'wise approving nods'. The response to our prize scheme alias Project Enthu (Rs.50/- for the best article published) has been good. But the war-heads and other explosive materials are conspicuously small in number. The relation Rs.50/- = 5 movies or Mount Road > 30 milkshakes

at Quark should set many more minds thinking, and writing.

And for the information of the few misguided enthusiasts who are already knee-deep in their family archives, searching frantically for 'humorous anecdotes', we repeat: all articles - humour, serious analyses, satires, poems, opinions and other writings of general interest - are welcome. With this clarification and reminder, we hope that in future, the number of our contributors equals the oodles of commentators and critics on this campus.

* * *

Winner of the Rs.50- prize for
the best article : Vijay Nambisan

* * *

CAUSERIE

Kumaran Sathasivam

While most readers I talked to said that they shared my views on the deforestation in our campus, one has written to ask whether I'd planted and tended a tree in my first year. No, I did not, because this commendable scheme was not yet conceived when I was a fresher.

An article in Focus flippantly referred to a complaint that "an acre of trees had been felled and consequently the ecological balance had been disturbed". The writer seems to have missed my point that an acre a day can build up to disastrous consequences in the long run. However, he has rightly deplored the pathetic response to the tree planting scheme, which hardly calls for any effort from the students involved. Why not make it involve all students?

Speaking without details of the tree planting scheme, I would like to mention that re-forestation will have meaning only if the trees we plant are the same (or similar) to those that have been removed - planting Ashoka trees where thorn scrub (the main vegetation of our campus) ^{was} destroyed will not repair the damaged ecosystem.

* * *

Last month as I entered my room there was a big thump inside and I stared startled, at a pair of monkeys leaping down from my shelf. I wonder who was more staggered, man or monkeys-for these red-handed rascallions looked utterly guilty and lost no time

in scrambling out through the window. But once outside, they kept peering at me through the bars to see what I would do apart from yelling at them. Fortunately, I'd foiled their attempts before they could really begin their investigations, a spate of which took place in my hostel then.

It is of interest that these simians on entering a room first upset buckets of water if there are any. Then they pilfer whatever food is available. If there is no food, they simply turn the room inside out - open every box, drawer or container and fling the contents around. Luckily no calculators, watches or valuables seem to have been damaged or purloined in these raids.

Talking of monkeys, did you know that their relatives include some lemurs which have as much intelligence as a pigeon, and anti-thetically, the well known chimpanzees?

Dr. Jane van Lawick-Goodall observed chimpanzees in the wild and noted that they were excellent tool-users. They "fished" for termites in their nests with sticks and twigs. To extract water from deep tree-holes, chimps used sponges made from chewed leaves!

THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE

Every school boy knows by heart the preamble to the constitution, and what exactly the Coriolis force is, but do you-yes, you, who spend endless hours each night with the calculus of variations-do you know anything of the real stuff of life? Now that was merely a rhetorical question. I do not expect an answer, and will be content if you pass the salt. Thank you.

My view-I know you'll wish to hear it-my view is that you had much better direct your efforts towards trying to get on with people. I don't mean you should perpetually sport a greasy smile or compliment the professor on the purity of his diction when he knows as well as you do that he has a cleft palate and his foot prints are littered with aitches. Oh no, there are subtler ways to flatter-do you doubt it? I beg your pardon, you want me to quit hogging the salt, as you put it in your vulgar way. Here you are. You are welcome.

I see the gentleman on my right (he purports to be a friend of mine and thinks he can, on the strength of that assumption, address me with names his mother would blush to hear) - the gentleman on my right is not interested. The time is ten minutes to eight, and he wishes (for what earthly reason, I know not) to get to class on time. Now I have no objection to sleeping at M.S.B one or two mornings a month, but this haste is ridiculous. In fact, I wish they'd change the mess timings and begin breakfast at ten,

but there is an extraordinary number of people who wish to take notes. It points to a want of sense, a lack of concern for personal health. Rising at half-past seven is doing things to my digestion.

As I was saying when I was interrupted-what was I saying when I was interrupted? Well, no matter, I can always find something else to say. I recollect^I mentioned the Constitution. You deny it? You say my subject was flattery? I must protest. I never discourse on flattery, I only practise it.

Now the Constitution is a very valuable item. As I recollect, it has not yet been ratified- I am speaking of the students' Constitution, my good ass, the big one came through in 1857- it is still on the shelf, hotly contested by bookworms, and perfectly right that it should be so. Everyone should be aware of the existence of a Constitution, and no one should know what it says. History is not something to throw at people's heads: one can be sure of what one is saying only if there are no possible grounds for objection. "Ignorance is like an exotic fruit: touch it, and the bloom is gone." - Yes, I know it's infradignitatum to quote, but I am quoting Wilde.

That idiot has made me forget what I was

saying. (Bring me a coffee, will you?) If there is one thing I deplore, it is this lack of attention. No one listens. There is a theory that no event occurs unless an observer is present, is there not? Spare me the details. Similarly, no word, no utterance is real if it has not a listener. I don't mean a hearer. How on earth do you expect these tables to benefit from my wisdom? My words, remember, are not mine but posterity's. You have to go? You're late for class? Very well.

Ah, my coffee. Thank you.

Have you noticed this revolting tendency of the public to sweeten its coffee to the point of nausea? Don't apologize. Your intentions were honourable, and you're assuredly on the path paved with those sentiments. I do not like to moralize; I admit that my standards far exceed those of martyrdom; I shall therefore say nothing. I have used the tactic to good effect on several occasions. - You seem surprised.

Oh, do you have to go class too? You have a headache? I am sorry, but I cannot help feeling it is your fault. Half-probably more-these modern ills are the result of repressions. You attempt to control yourself in all kinds of barbaric ways, you bind your metaphorical feet. If you wish to express yourself, do not be afraid of doing so. But in moderation, always in moderation - do not take the risk of being called a windbag. Your headache is

worse? You wish to retire to bed? A sound policy.

There is no one left to talk to. I shall visit the common room: the common room boy at least is always to be found there. And he is the perfect listener. He does not understand English.

Now, to keep in touch, I shall soliloquize....

Vijay Nambisan

* * *

ON NAMES AND NAMEBOARDS

It may be argued vehemently that in a world overridden by the identity crisis, nameboards cannot be out of place. Even that enduring Shakespearean adage, 'What's in a name? The rose would smell as sweet by any other name' can do little to dilute the significance of names. Shakespeare's apparent trivialization of the notion can however, be only justified in a fanciful context. The thrust of modern thinking would discount the devaluation of the 'name' factor. Besides, Shakespeare did not veto names altogether. He was only not convinced of the intrinsic worth of any particular name. What's more! he lived in an age characterized

by political stability and social exuberance when men lived integrated lives unimpaired by psychological disturbances. The neurosis that is endemic in our urban centres was alien to the stable, dynamic community of Shakespeare's England. So a society that was not afflicted by a 'loss of self' could afford to take a casual view of the 'identity' issue. However, today, a Babel of voices would declare unequivocally that 'names' are indispensable in our day-to-day life, to distinguish and individualize objects and ensure the psychological wellbeing of individuals.

To the protagonists of 'identity' the importance of 'names', perhaps, is nowhere better illustrated than in the time-honoured practice of naming the newborn babe. In the oriental world, they would swear that the naming function is attended by an elaborate ceremony which goes to confirm the significance of the event. Since names have been universally found to be useful identification marks in the conduct of worldly affairs, the functionality of name-boards can hardly be overstated. But when name-boards indicate false signals, it is tenable to say that their utility is negated, their merit is vitiated.

Name-boards in the Humanities Department have always been shortlived.

No sooner do a fresh set of name-boards appear than a demolition squad sweeps by and leaves rack and ruin in its wake. Some boards vanish altogether and those that remain are mere caricatures of their original selves. Arrangements are then speedily made for the effective disposal of the mangled relics. An official inquiry is yet to be instituted to uncover the identity of the vandals. It could very well be an act of displaced aggression on the part of a few frustrated students, the victims of intolerable classroom boredom inflicted on them by some of the over-zealous instructors. However, it is the general consensus in the Department that this is only the expression of 'a powerful overflow of spontaneous feelings' of a specifically indigenous breed and that no external forces are involved! So, after one of those dramatic raids, there would follow a lean phase when the faculty languished without name indicators, chafing under the sting of anonymity! After all, it was a tacit assumption in the elitistic scientific circles that the Humanities Department is only meant to have a faceless image in an Institution where excellence is measured by your contribution to the making of the mindless scientist. So in a world where its professional status has been almost reduced to nullity, its 'anonym'

was even found to be an appropriate embellishment for such a non-contributing Department!

So, after a similar long bleak spell during which the identity crisis was unhinging the mind and breaking the spirit of the faculty, the Head of the Department was called upon to take drastic steps to rectify a desperate situation. He acted swiftly and nameboards went up at an astonishing speed. The crisis was dissolved and self-confidence restored. But, unfortunately, the general gaiety left me untouched. I noticed they had made a clownish representation of my name as follows - ELIZABETHN KURIAN. The very fact that the letter 'N' is not preceded by a blank space and followed by a dot turns my name from a noun into an adjective as is evident in an act of rapid reading when Elizabeth and N would merge to result in the epithet 'Elizabethan'. The unwitting malice of man had devised a double-edged weapon in that innocuous-looking name-board, because the unkindest cut had been reserved for Dr. Kurian. Even Prince Philip the consort of the Queen of England walks only a step behind the Queen. But Dr. Kurian who has turned 'Elizabethan' has been apparently put 300 years behind his wife. They have thus led him to a blinking anachronism and

also breached the citadel of male chauvinism! In one deft stroke, they have liquidated my name and demoted and antiquated my husband!

Do you now wonder why I feel constrained to do some rethinking on the apparently inviolable theme of names and name boards? If my words lack credibility, I would urge the reader to take a stroll to the Humanities Department!

Mrs. Elizabeth Kurian

CINEMA! CINEMA!!

No, no more movies for me! Is it I, who usually miss no movie, who idolise the superstar, who spare no effort to imitate him (and at what cost!) speaking, you ask. You stare at me as you would have if you had heard Einstein say in his deathbed that all relativity was humbug and he had all along been joking. Yes, you have reason to stare hard and intensely at me. You seek an explanation and I am going to give you one, though the mental torture it would subject me to is great.

Knowing how romantic and crazy about movies I am, you will not be surprised to hear that I decided to do, in real life, what the superstar does in every film he acts. I am not all that handsome (or strong) but so isn't the superstar. If he can win the heart of any lovely girl in films, so

can I, I reasoned.

I scouted till I found the girl. Then I set about the business in right earnest. The first step would be to arrange a chance meeting with her. And did I meet her! The next day, I followed her all the way from her house to the busiest thoroughfare in the city. Twice she turned and I blushed, tried to smile but couldn't manage anything better than a sheepish grin. Increasing her pace, she went into a nearby shop. I waited for a while and unable to contain myself any longer lest I lose my chance, I walked right in straight into Madame Dracula herself. The massive lady lifted me up by my collar and growled, "what business have you here?" Trembling within, but anxious to put up a brave front before my lady love, (who was watching me with mild interest from under a metallic cocoon). I countered weakly, "Do you, my dear lady, know that we are in free India and I have every right to go anywhere I please?" Mme. Dracula said, "Ha!" and glanced significantly at Juliet who, in turn, glanced conspiratorially and a shade more significantly at Mme. D. The next thing, I found myself being propelled at an astronomical speed out into the streets. A good bouncer that! As I sorted myself out,

I chanced to see the now-mysteriously-conspicuous sign plate "MADAME LOUISE'S BEAUTY PARLOUR - FOR LADIES ONLY". I dusted myself and walked away furtively. Well, given that circumstance, even the superstar couldn't have done better.

I did not give up. Next in line would be a song. When I chanced to see Miss. J the next day in a secluded corner of the park, I plunged straight into the job at hand. I began humming a popular tune and got so carried away that I started to sing aloud and dance to the tune weaving intricate patterns around her. This had not gone on for more than a minute when I heard a vaguely familiar whistle—a Policeman's, Caution getting the better of courage and the urge for self-preservation blinding my senses, I ran. Yes, you guessed it right, straight into the guardian of the law. It was a full fifteen minutes before he and the crowd finished with me.

Love conquers it all. Even a week had not passed before I was in business again, my body sufficiently patched up. On one of my evening prowls, I saw my lady love and my god, she was being followed. The two things, walking only a few paces behind arm in arm, kept dogging her foot steps

stopping when she stopped and moving again when she did. My lovelorn mind influenced by a thousand movies, I acted. I caught up with them, punched one on his face and felled the other with a backhand chop or whatever it is. I stood gloating over my easy success, looking victoriously at Juliet. So, she walked straight up to me, her face red, eyes flashing and as I stretched out my arms in eager anticipation for her to fall into them, SLAP came her reply.

I have this to say in my favour. I had no time to recover from this unexpected on slaught before the two things pummelled the living daylight out of me. How was I to know that those two were her cousins and she was walking a few paces ahead of them because of a slight argument?

That did it. I decided then and there to keep away from movies and the fair sex in future. Never before was my mind so made up.

It is now a week since I was released. Now I have recovered completely and am stead fa HEY, who is that? My GG OO.....SSH.....She looks great. See you, man. what? Experience?

Moral? Some other time, old man can't stop now.... Important work and all that O JULI (damn Juliet!) O CLEOPATRA here I come to start afresh the sequence. God, help me get to the 'conflict with the parents and separation' stage at least this time. Arun k.

POETRY

Conjunction
 And but
 Conditional
 Perhaps, and the other
 And also if only
 A time when Brahma
 Ditch Mythology -
 A time when the apes
 D darwinism -
 A time when the big bang
 D astronomy -
 A time when the feeling
 Startedtoexist
 and sensed
 and t(h)rilled
 and named
 or is it all subjective
 w.r.t. the feeling?
 There is no other
 cept the feeling says so
 and feels and fails and falls

Decay, death, ditchya.
 The Blank sea is drying up
 What remains, non-pardner?
 Not even.nothing
 And even that
 Gone,
 When the Earth threw up a fault.

- C.THURU

THE NAKED DOOR

The hostel common-room was the venue of the conference for the search of suitable Door-Plate, 1983. I allude to the incident occuring seven moons ago. The inmates were contentedly flipping through a ribald assortment of magazines when, a Macha materialised.

"I say", said the Macha, "I need something to put on my door. Something you know....."

"Something unique?" offered a Fandu.

"Something mysterious, attention-catching, curiosity tickling?" contributed another Fandu.

"In other words, something to put on your door", Concluded a Miseye.

"Quite, quite," conceded the Macha.

"How about 'Peace Frog Jr.!' asked another Macha. There was a pregnant pause. The situation in many ways bore a resemblance to the case of the Emperors clothes.

"Why 'junior' asked a Miseye, at last. "It appears as though Peace Frogs come in two types - Sr. and Ir. And coming to think of it, what is a Peace Frog?"

"How about 'The Renegade?'" suggested a Fandu.

"Tut - tut," retorted Macha-I, "Nothing antagonistic for my door, if antagonistic is my word".

"Child of vision" contributed another Fandu.

"And you could add 'visiting hrs-15.30hrs to 17.30 hrs'".

"Vyphor do you visit a child of vision?" queried a Total Miseye.

"For visions, of course, "answered a Fandu. "But my own guess is "Yeti" would just about do it".

"Too short," dismissed Macha - I.

"In that case what say 'Macha, Macha, Macha and Macha, Solicitors'?" suggested a Miseye. "And you could finish it off with

'and Co.(Pvt)Ltd.'"

"Too long, "dismissed Macha-I.

"I've got it, "claimed a Fandu, whom one noticed had been pondering deeply for the past couple of minutes in a manner not unlike a Greek Philosopher on the verge of a new Axiom. "'Divinity Inc.'That should just about freeze anyone to take a second look."

"Yes," said Macha-I bitterly, "And what would the second look reveal?'Divinity Inc'. And a third look, if the looker is patient enough, would reveal no more. I want something subtle. Not necessarily metaphysical."

That bit had all the inmates thinking, some gyrating their mandibles others gazing into yonder space, brow furrowed with cerebral toil.

"'Soliciter of tomorrow'" suggested a Macha at length.

"Disgustingly unoriginal," barked Macha-I.

Brow-furrowing continued., Not without success. A Fandu leapt up some time later to announce his brain child. "'The Bushman Lives Without" he shouted with glee."That

ought to knock anyone flat."

"Lives without what?" asked a Miseye petulantly, who appeared unacquainted with the rudiments of drama.

That however had the conference stumped as none could answer that one. And the conference would probably have chewed their mandibles off had not the post-sunset-repast been announced.

* * *

The next day all Machas, Fandus and Miseyes who happened to pass by Macha-I's cave, were surprised to see a cryptic card on the entrance. It merely said:

Shrivardhan Lele.

THE LEGEND
OF URASHIMA TARO

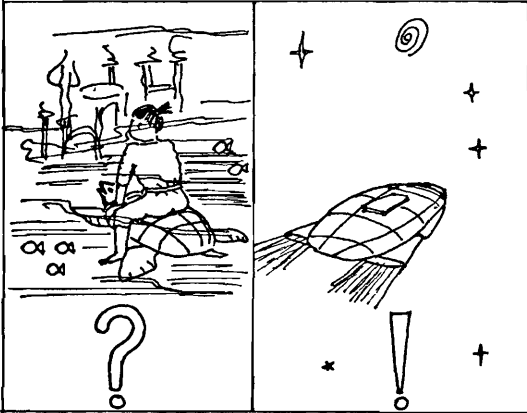
This story may sound a lot like many others we have heard, but it could be different in an unimaginable way.

A few hundred years ago, there lived in Japan a fisherman called Urashima Taro.

One day..

Urashima saw some boys on the beach teasing a large turtle they had caught. He felt sorry for the animal and asked the

boys to release it. When they refused, he bought it from them and released it into the sea.



A few days later, when Urashima was out at sea in his boat, who should swim up to him but the turtle he had recently saved! To show his gratitude, the turtle offered to take Urashima on his back to the sea-god's palace.

The fisherman accepted and was soon going down, down into the ocean depths on the turtle's back. He was warmly received and entertained at the sea-god's palace.

Urashima lived in luxury for a few days, then decided to go back home. The sea-god gave him a farewell gift, a box which he warned him never to open. Then the turtle took him back to the surface.

Now the beach was the same one Urashima had set out from, but everything was strangely different. He could not find his house, his family, his friends, or anything else he knew.

Then he learnt that during his few days under sea, Japan had aged three hundred years!

Much dejected, he opened the box he had been given. White smoke rose up from the box and enveloped him. Urashima was transformed into a white-haired old man.

Now, what kind of a story is that? Urashima didn't marry the sea-god's daughter and live happily ever after. He didn't come home a hero, joyfully welcomed by his family and friends. Here's a good man treated rottenly by Fate. Doesn't it sound like a real-life story? I think it does.

The turtle, the sea, the sea-god's palace, are all symbolisms!

The turtle was an extra terrestrial,
the sea, space, and the palace, a planet.

How else could the ancient Japanese
have explained this strange phenomenon?
When time passes much more slowly for a
man who is travelling than for the world
he leaves behind, it on'y means he must be
moving at a speed close to that of light.

And this observation, faithfully
preserved and passed on, tells us that space
travel had indeed taken place, beyond a
shadow of doubt.

Story-tellers may make up almost any-
thing, but it is highly improbable for
anyone to have made up such an accurate
account of the phenomenon of time dilation
(unknown to us until 1/2 a century ago),
which is why I think the story is true.

Urashima didn't go with a turtle into
the sea, he went into space with an extra
terrestrial.

There's only one thing which bothers me.
What could the box mean? Any ideas?

G.C. Prasad

ON THE BRINK OF MEMORY

Measly melancholy that strikes again.
And daring, desperate, I wound
Towards the dullening draught of pain-killers
Easing the pain that creeps in again
When the dose of destruction loses its spell,
And there dwell again on the forgotten hopes
Of my once-intoxicated lunacy.
Mis-spelling the bleak future of those
rainbow hopes,
Agony passed on in tortuous sudden trans-
positions
Now to gnaw with claw - ridden unmitigated
poison,
Seeping into the veins of sense and breath.
Cheaply-won affections of a defrauded
decanter
That yielded nothing in emptiness.
Crashing on the misty glass - panes of a
frosty noon,
On a wind-blown weather-beaten mansion of
isolation
Set, against a desolate landscape of
bitterness

Are the silent, anguished remnants of memories
That, once impregnated with meaning, held a
future:

Hollowed futures of desolate retreats
That crushed into the blood-veins of
fiery aloneness.

The dread sway of passionless pursuits
Materialising into momentous memories
Forcing the cloistered heart to renounce
its claim on aloofness

And admit in reluctant painful compulsion
That defeat is never a one-way dimension,
The echoes that recur resounding to a
violent throbbing miasma.

Breathing hailstorms then.
The crushed soul of ruthless coldness
Stirs abroad and admits the anguish of loss.
Paved paths deviate into drilling destinies
And graveyards groan their gloating mysteries
While the tears of mortality brew a tale
Bursting at the rims to explode.
And the springs of language are shut into
caverns of truth
Where eyes, refused admittance, move on.

If your human flaws of ice-like solidity
Shattered and torn, lie embittered,
And, messing up your frustrated futures
You deign to look back once again,
You behold the silent, wounded, exposed
lie of a mask.

Madhavi Menon.

CONFESIONS OF A HUMANOID

We love insisting we are strange
creatures - we detest anything run-of-the-
mill. We exist in this form, Homo Zapiens,
only for 270 days a year. Most of us exist
for 5 years - a new generation of 4-year-
Creatures has recently sprung up - some
are gifted longevity and last 10 or 12
years! Everytime we leave this secluded
isle of ours, we undergo a curious form
of psychological and physical moulting,
reverting to ordinary human forms.
(Ref: Sarkar Commission's Report 1950.
this report gives you further information
on our origins)

The Darwinian Laws of Natural Selection do not apply to our species. There are the very successful (Form S) and the very unsuccessful (Form U)-these forms coexist admirably in symbiotic harmony. As everything's relative, the successful are not successful without the unsuccessful. ((i) 'Case Against the Laws of Natural Selection' - Phantom, Department of Maths, IITM; Dr.Ambirajulu, Department of Economics, IITM)

Recent studies show evidence of the existence of a thin layer of ironoxide (more commonly called rust), that envelops the greycell matter of both forms of Zapiens. Though the evidence is not very convincing, Form U is said to have a thicker layer of rust. Causative agents range from laziness to a marked lack of external stimuli. Most researchers agree that, strangely, climatic conditions here have very little to do with the oxide formation('Unusuolo Creaturolus-Rust Formation and its Removal using Fluidised Beds' - Dr.M.Monster, Division of Robots, IITM; Dr.Sethuram, Acting Secretary, T.I.T., Turkey)

We have an amazing penchant for short spells of hibernation, during the day - the

season not a governing criterion. Statistics show that 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm (all days of the week) is the dangerous period. Under controlled conditions in a lab, attempts were made to quash this trait by injecting Drawing, Laboratory and Work-shop from 1.00 to 4.30 pm-a disastrously unsuccessful experiment. The chemicals acted as soporifics. The experiment is still on - I wish them luck. Studies also showed that this habit of ours has no deleterious effect on a good night's sleep. 'On the Excessive Hibernation Tendencies of Homo Zapiens' - Dr.A.Kasthuri, Biomedical department, IITM (ii) 'Unusuolo Creaturolus - its Hibernation Disease and How to Erradicate it' - Dr.Swaminathus, Depart. of Physiology, IITM and Dr.A.Reddyolus, Division of Shock Treatment, IITM)

As a species we take pride in the fact that we are favoured to snatch the "Hårdiest - Creature - of - the year" Prize from old favourite Saharan Camelo. Given the choice, we prefer to wallow shamelessly in water- but circumstances have compelled us to subsist on a couple of litres per creature per day. Also, as is usual, our solid

intakes are loaded with potent carcinogens. The fact that under such adverse conditions. We do not need to form spores to exist, leaves the Prize Committee little choice but to hand it to us. (For greater insight into our hariness - read-(i) 'A strong Case for the Survival of Homo Zapiens with No Water' - Dr.Malayalam, Water Supply Board, Madras;(ii)'Unusuolo Creaturoli - Tests to Demonstrate their Natural Immunity Against Poisons'-Dr.Zeroe Watte', Manager, Nutrition Dept., IITM).

But below this hardy outer facade lies the quintessence of our beings. We really are an amiable bunch of fun loving softies, capable of amazing flashes of brilliance that surprise us more than it does anyone else. We have a voracious appetite for that gourmand's delight called The Textbook (the cheaper off-the-shelf KGB versions are quite popular). We delight in trashy fast-foods like Notes as well. When prodded from above, we make oodles of noise - but rarely bite back! Our adaptability to a rapidly changing, often hostile environment is amazing (If you want to know how nice we are - Ref: 'Why we are Nice - A Psychological Approach' - Dr.Rita Ghatakus, Psychoanalyst, IITM; Dr.Joy Thomasum,

Dept of Nice People, IITM).

In short, you could say we are not ordinary!!

POST SCRIPT:

I apologize for any inconvenience caused. This is purely a piece of fiction and any resemblance of the characters to anyone dead or alive is purely coincidental.

Malcolm J. Panthaki

(This seems to be the season for coincidences!)

- Editors)

GOING, GOING, GONE..

I opened my bedroom window - a window overlooking a doghouse in the yard. It had once been the home of a piebald (black and white) dog. My dog, Frisky. Today, a little cross marked the spot where a dog died, doing his duty.

Memories of a fateful Friday in September, nearly three years ago: A boy clutching his satchel, going to school. Soon, his mother following - off to work. Then, after locking up the house, his father - college bound. For Frisky, this was nothing unusual. He'd guard the house

till its occupants returned. But today the hands of Fate were at work. A wall was being erected in the backyard. We didn't want Frisky to run out of the yard so he was chained up. Frisky didn't mind this much. His usually followed Snoopy's method of conserving energy by going to sleep. But someone had left the front gate open.

The neighbours were woken up from their mid afternoon Siesta by the snarls, growls and yelps in a furious dogfight. Peeping over the wall, they saw a horrible sight. Frisky, chained and bleeding, was battling with a large, red-eyed, salivating dog - a dog with rabies. But Frisky had never lacked fighting spirit and he drove away the intruder long before a frantic phone caller brought my father racing home.

But at what cost? The vet said rabies was inevitable. Was this the way it was all going to end? After ten years as a faithful, lovable bundle of warmth and affection, was Frisky to be put to sleep? To die at the hands of those he loved and trusted?

Changing images - flashed by our eyes. Run over by a jeep, a mouthful of insecticide:

Frisky had survived them though the odds had been against him. Why not this time also? Couldn't we give him that last chance? But it was not to be.

Frisky looked up from the bowl of milk he loved so much. His eyes, so true, so faithful, voiced his thanks. Little did he realize the perfidy of the band that fed him. For the milk was liberally laced with sleeping pills. But Frisky's will to survive was strong. My heart gave a leap when I saw the drugs had no effect on him. But it was hope in vain. The last chance he was fighting for was still denied to him. More milk, more drugs; another betrayal. A drowsy stupor. And then the vet with that lethal injection. But Frisky fighting sleep, opened his eyes. True and faithful. Yet puzzled-who are these people trying to disturb me, muzzle me? A final effort- he bared his teeth; but sleep overcame him once more. Before his eyes closed, he looked at me, confident that I wouldn't let any harm befall him. I couldn't meet his gaze. I had completely misplaced his trust in me, repaid his years of love and faithfulness with betrayal. The needle

sped on its way and in a few seconds Frisky was no more. We buried him in that little plot of ground he held sacred.

It was all over except for feelings of love, of sorrow, of remorse, of guilt. They will always remain.

Anand Venkatraman

SUMMER EVENINGS

The sun shore mercilessly throughout the day, evaporating what little water was left on the dry land. It was a particularly hot summer. I had my customary summer holidays. Having finished the book I was reading, I had a bath. Taking the books I had read, I set out for the library.

I was doing my B.A in English Literature. I appreciated the books that were to be appreciated, that is the classics, and correspondingly scorned most Modern Literature. During the holidays, I either read or slept. All the resolutions made at the beginning of the holidays were comfortably forgotten, as resolutions are meant to be.

I was walking, or rather shuffling along with loose slipper, when I saw her standing there. She was waiting for me to

catch up with her. She had been my neighbour for three years when I was at a stage, due to my literary and academic pursuits, slightly indifferent to the fairer sex. I adjusted my shirt, patted my unruly hair, and becoming highly self-conscious, went up to her. I feel uncomfortable with girls, no doubt due to my conventional upbringing.

Exchanging those meaningless pleasantries, we walked to the library. Talking about this and that, we surprisingly came to the topic of social service. She was extolling the merits of her TIGERS CLUB. Ironical that a supposedly social service organization be named after a ferocious wild animal, She was talking about the help provided to all and sundry, especially to unemployed youth. It was unpleasant as I could see myself on the unemployed list in the near future. She criticized me for leaving Engineering to join B.A., as all persons I met now did. I shrugged my shoulders. She seemed sympathetic and understanding to the suffering of the poor, which is all very good.

We were near the library now. Suddenly a drunk lurched across the street, stopped

in front of me and saluted. - 'Sa aam, Saar.'

He was around fifty years, shabbily dressed with a dirty beard. I was embarrassed. But he seemed to find our company congenial, for he walked along with us narrating his tale of woe. It was the usual story; poor wages, big family, hard labour and to escape that circle of hell, alcohol.

He asked me whether I knew Tamil. I shook my head, though I knew it well. I didn't want to be involved in ^{it} anyway. We turned to the gates of the library leaving him murmuring. I let out a sigh of relief.

My friend looked angry. What if someone saw us with that drunk? You should have at least sent him away. Useless fellow, good for nothing, wasting his money on . giving such fellows. You give them money and they will promptly get drunk.

For the second time that evening, I shrugged my shoulders. One tends to get philosophical when one sees such endemic poverty all around; rich people, striving to maintain their all important prestige, and for conscience's sake donating money or helping the poor superficially. I looked at her. She was good-looking, so who cared if she was just a dumb 'society-broad'?

Srinivas Rai

QUIZ . . .

1) For what role was Victor Banerjee, the Calcutta

stage actor, been chosen in David Lean's movie "A Passage to India"?

2) Name the brains of Georges Nagelmackers.

3) "Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in the night
God said, 'Let Newton be', and all was light"

This Couplet was capped by another. Quote it.

4) Why are the Nilgiris (The Blue Mountains) so named?

5) How does the echidna or spiny ant-eater protect itself?

6) "People grow together" is the advertising slogan of

Name the first air hostess.

8) What are the jobs of a) apsaras, b) kinnaras and c) gandharas in the court of Indra?

9) Freddie Laker (whose cheap air travel business collapsed) started a new travel company. What is it called?

10) Chaucer wrote "The Canterbury Tales". Who wrote "The Canterbury Puzzles"?

11) Who coined the phrase "Aya Ram, Gaya Ram" for floor crossers?

12) "He is the bloke with the degree in people". Who said this of whom?

13) Name the first university to throw open all courses to women.

14) "Life has no finish line". On whose car is this found?

15) "I sat next to the Duchess at tea
It was just as I feared it would be
Her rumblings abdominal
Were truly phenomenal
and everyone thought it was me!"
To whom do we owe the above?

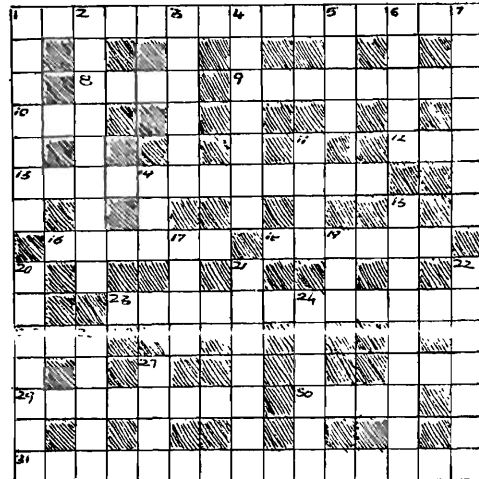
Compiled by Ananth Sethuraman

CROSS WORDCLUES ACROSS

- 1) A slight terror in freedom explains their reliance on each other (15)
- 8) Mostly one piece of an apparatus (4)
- 9) Enveloped and surrounded the vehicle facing the other way (8)
- 10) Sea monster, we hear, is a part of a circle (3)
- 12) We hear a bit of the organ (3)
- 13) Young Calvin is then in charge of the exercises (13)
- 16) Turn over, inactive with victory (6)
- 18) Priest gave me some Italian money in a couple of hundreds (6)
- 23) Will be on congenial terms, having a claw stuck in the two thousand dollar thigh (3,5,4)
- 25) Talk about a ... (2)
- 28) Heathen African leader's christian name? (3)
- 29) Proposal to manifest most of the lure (8)
- 30) Wag a thin paperboard (4)
- 31) Bury the friend of the land all over the world? (15)

CLUES DOWN

- 1) Conscience tenders the bill? (7)
- 2) Harsh sounds like the vehicle you loaned? (9)
- 3) Sounds like we hate the examination (6)
- 4) Promised a shelf in the Polive Department (7)
- 5) Run like an arrow (4)
- 6) Mother of pearl, the way the land lies (5)
- 7) Authorise to kill the headless beast (7)
- 11) Satisfy the noisy patients (4)
- 14) Take her to court (3)
- 15) Six of the Central Investigate Dept, in their den going up to a killing of cold makers? (9)
- 17) Curse these pests (4)
- 19) Urge the guy (3)
- 20) Incentor sounds as if he takes Italian food (7)
- 21) Boxer intended to nourish, we hear (7)
- 22) At frolicking, noisy thirty he's prosperous (7)
- 24) Papal messenger says goodbye to sister!!! (2)
- 26) Whimper to rhythm with fifty Romans (2)
- 27) One of those lucky ones you count when you win a lottery (4)



ANSWERTIMES

- 1) Dr. Aziz
- 2) The Orient Express
- 3) "It did not last, the Devil howling, 'Ho!
Let Einstein be! ' restored the status quo"
- 4) From the Kurinji flower forming a blue
carpet on the hill-slopes when they blossom,
once in twelve years
- 5) By digging itself into the ground
- 6) D.C.N.
- 7) Ellen Church
- 8) a) Dancing b) playing musical instruments
c) singing
- 9) Skytrain Holidays
- 10) H.E.Dudeney
- 11) Y.B.Chavan
- 12) Hogg of Brearley
- 13) The London University
- 14) Carl Lewis
- 15) Woodrow Wilson

Solutions to Crossword

ACROSS

- 1) Interdependence 8) unit 9) Embraced
10) Orc 12) Ear 10) Invert 18) Cleric
23) Get Along With 25) Rib 28) Idi
29) Overture 30) Card 31) Internationally

DOWN

- 1) Invoice 2) Truculent 3) Detest
4) Pledged 5) Dart 6) Nacrd 7) Endorse
11) Fill 14) Sus 15) viricidal
17) Rats 19) Egg 20) Marconi
21) Aliment 22) Thrifty 24) Nuncio
26) Bleat 27) Star