

Issue no. 2
August 2025
Tajurba | Experience

MUSAFIR



"Musafir" traverses from the self to discovering the vulnerabilities and beauty of the world. Either you are traversing the map of the inner world or simply surrendering to the outer world. Are you a passenger on a train watching time pass by, an observant traveller intrigued by the dew drops on leaves or a guest awaiting the arrival of the real self? When we hear the word Musafir, the hues of *blue*, *golden* and *crashing ocean waves* come to our minds.

Ananya
Chhabra



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Cover picture by Ananya Chhabra



where Tajurba | Experience meets you

Letter from the Advisor



Hello Readers,

As I sit down to write this letter, it feels almost surreal that we've completed more than one year of Tajurba with one issue already out, readership spanning over five countries, and most importantly, a team that has grown from eight passionate individuals to twelve committed members spread across the globe.

'Musafir' (traveller) felt like the most fitting theme for our next issue, following 'The Self'. The idea behind Musafir was to honour the transient nature of our experiences as though we're always in motion, forever travelling, even if only through observation and reflection.

We're delighted to share that this issue brings together voices from all over the world. Within its pages, you'll find pieces that explore diverse facets of what it means to be a Musafir (traveller).

Before I bid you farewell and invite you to flip through the issue, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our wonderful team at Tajurba, who have been working tirelessly behind the scenes quietly but passionately. They are the reason we continue moving closer to our goal: creating a platform for bold voices to be heard and seen.

When you turn the pages of our second issue, you're not just reading a well-curated e-zine, you're immersing yourself in a melting pot of untold stories and unique perspectives.

This letter written from 5,000 feet above ground, mid-flight somehow felt like the perfect setting for it.

Until we meet again.

With warmest regards,
On behalf of the entire Tajurba team,
Katyayani Rana
Advisor, Tajurba Experiences



HALF WAY THERE

Aditya



I AM A PERPETUAL *MUSAFIR*

Jassifat Kaur
Khurana

I carry the sky in my pocket and fold distance into my suitcase
Because this journey started long before I was born
In the prayers of my ancestors who dreamed of horizon lines

What language does longing speak?
When home is a concept, not a place
When your bones know the weight of travel
Before they knew how to walk

The musafir knows how
Identity is not fixed to land
But carried in how you pour your tea
In the songs that make your chest ache
In prayers murmured half-remembered
In dreams that visit in your mother tongue

My inheritance is this
Restlessness in my blood
This uncanny ability to bloom anywhere
And belong nowhere completely

But I am not lost
I am the journey itself
Every arrival contains a departure
Every goodbye holds a hello
This constant motion
This beautiful burden
This sacred wandering
This is my truth

I am musafir
Not passing through life
But letting life pass through me

THE TRAIN

Sanithyaa

I did hold a ticket in hand...
Fiddling in between my fingers...
Hearing my dreams sing in an unknown land...
Oh, the gentle voice of subconscious singers...

I'm self-reliant at last, I weave effort each day...
But my nose ring steals my thunder...
My brain rests and my beauty gets me my pay...
Oh, is my ornament a curse? I wonder...

They call me beautiful, yet the compliment burns me...
Ashes of failed toil complaining to my passion...
For a woman in profession was just eye-candy simply...
A vagabond luring equality with desperation...

The train screams a call, announcing its arrival...
As I contemplate boarding this journey as a woman...
To answer questions and justify my survival...
Is it a blessing or is it a bad omen?

To bear a child in my 30s, to not be married in mid-20s...
To be younger or to be older...
Yet within me I sustain a myriad lives...
And many more questions I bear on my shoulders...

Life of a toddler who wants to grow...
A teenager who wants to contest...
A girl who simply wants to know...
And a woman who protests...

I did board the train, hopeful but distraught...
For I did hold a ticket in hand...
I took a moment of silence for all the battles women fought...
And yet how men fail to understand...

My train arrives at the station...
Giving me a banquet of opportunities anew...
But a silent moment between aspiration and hesitation...
Captured a false reality, all so true...

I wish I could travel like a man, with no fears in my head...
And experience joy beyond a feminist book's text...
But I wish I could board the train proudly as a woman instead...
And perhaps for once not deboard it at the next...

NO ONE'S HERE

Jassifat Kaur
Khurana

A JOURNEY WITHIN

and thus, the musafir finds home.

Saachi
Grover

She was one of those-working 12 hours a day-living alone-unwashed clothes and dishes piled up-no place to sit in the whole apartment and being too busy to even text "I'm busy" kind of person. Her chaotic apartment was a replica of her mind. She was one of those. It wasn't an insult to be "one of those", she owned it beautifully, but it started taking a toll on her mind, trapped in a web of emotions but nothing to clean it with.

On one bizarre and fine evening, she decided to do something rather unlikely. The noise in her head had suffocated her to the point that she was ready to do anything for a moment of silence. So despite her skepticism, she lay down on the mat, surrounded by similar sounds that she had never noticed before - the rush of trains, buzz of cars and whirl of airplanes. Amidst the cacophony, she wanted a moment to herself.

Earlier that day, one of her colleagues had told her about Yoga Nidra, which translates to yogic sleep and, in the bookish meaning, is "a systematic guided meditation technique that induces deep relaxation while maintaining conscious awareness" or in simpler terms, a physical, emotional and mental journey of the self. But what did it actually mean, to her, or to you and I, us amateurs? That's what she was there to find, on the mat. To experience that it wasn't just a journey of healing, it was a journey of self- discovery.

Her colleague had shared two voice notes, the first one being the guide to the Yoga Nidra, and the second one being work-related. With so much self control and patience, she decided to play the former. It wasn't easy. The initial few minutes were mostly her lying on the mat with her forehead all wrinkled and her mind wandering elsewhere. Slowly and gradually, with a lot of effort, she finally surrendered herself.

As the guide spoke, she listened, the noises within her head and of the outside world slowly started to fade away. She felt a sense of peace, a sense of calm. She traversed through her whole body, visiting each cell, from head to toe, one at a time. After a long time, she finally felt the allowance of being the musafir of her soul.

Untitled

Akshara
Nair



FERRY TO THE FUTURE





FIVE STARS FOR BEING HUMAN: A LOVE LETTER TO THE ANTHROPOCENE REVIEWED

Parnika



Have you ever thought about reviewing humanity's temporal range? Or sunsets? Indianapolis? No, right? But John Green has. And let me tell you, he has done a phenomenal job.

"The Anthropocene Reviewed" is a podcast in which John Green, the best-selling author reviews "different facets of the human-centered planet" on a five star scale. And by facets of the human-centered planet, I'm referring to everything under the sun- from football to viral meningitis and from Kentucky Bluegrass to the practice of googling strangers.

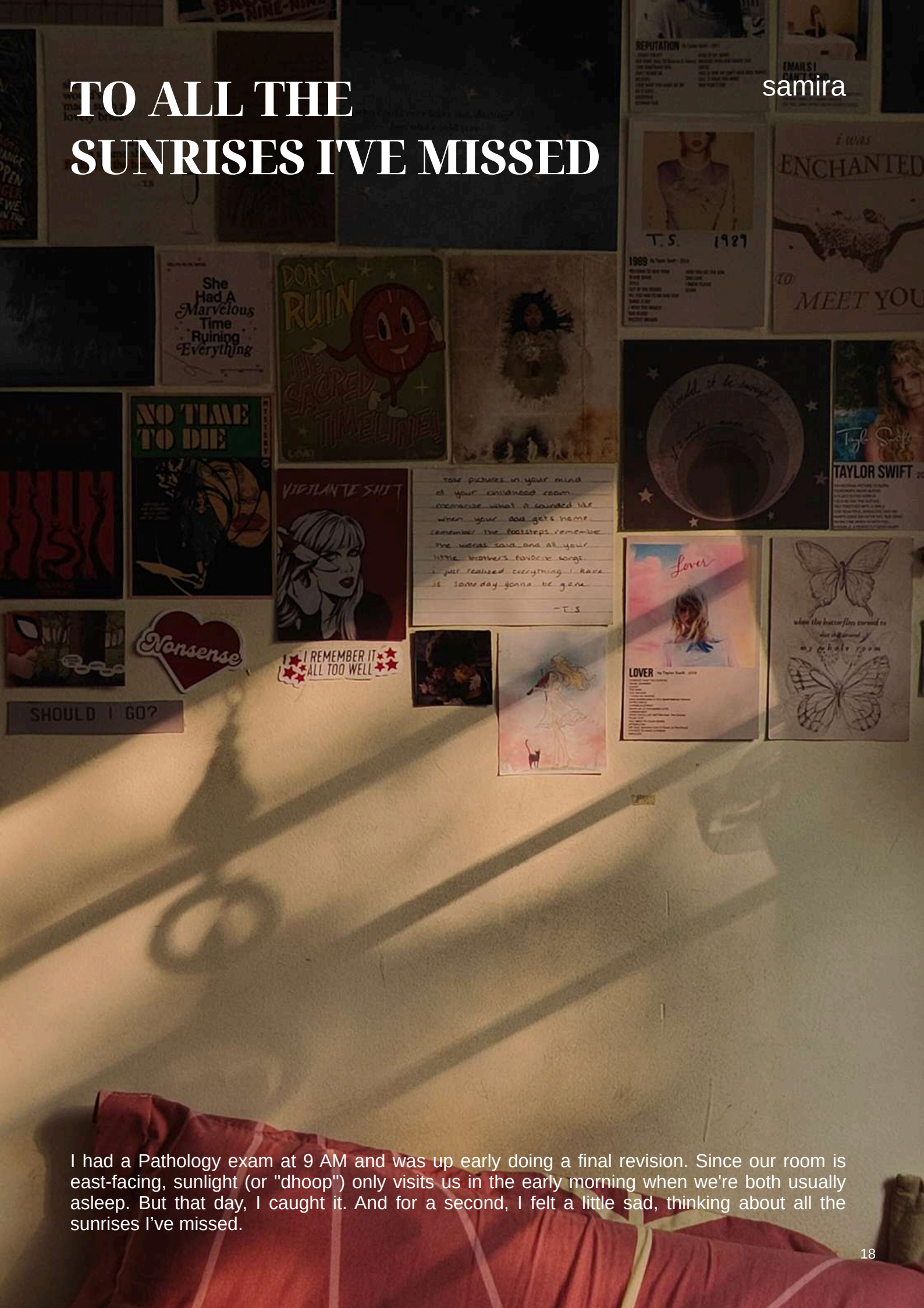
'Anthropocene' literally means of or relating to humanity. As the name suggests, John gives a spin to the mundane and the unconventional through the creative lens of humanity. For example, his review on Canada Geese also consists of the line "Canada Geese are hard to love. But then again, so are most of us".

The podcast started in 2018 and turned into a book in 2021, 50% of which has been highlighted by me in my copy of the book. The podcast is equal parts funny, well-researched and profound. It takes you by surprise because you never expect "I'm finding out as I'm aging that I'm in love with the world" in a review of "our capacity for wonder" (which you don't expect either).

The irony isn't lost on Green as the second last episode of the series is titled "The Anthropocene Reviewed, Reviewed". Whether you read the book or listen to the podcast, you'll be in awe of his worldview and start looking at the world differently. I give the Anthropocene Reviewed 5 stars.

TO ALL THE SUNRISES I'VE MISSED

samira



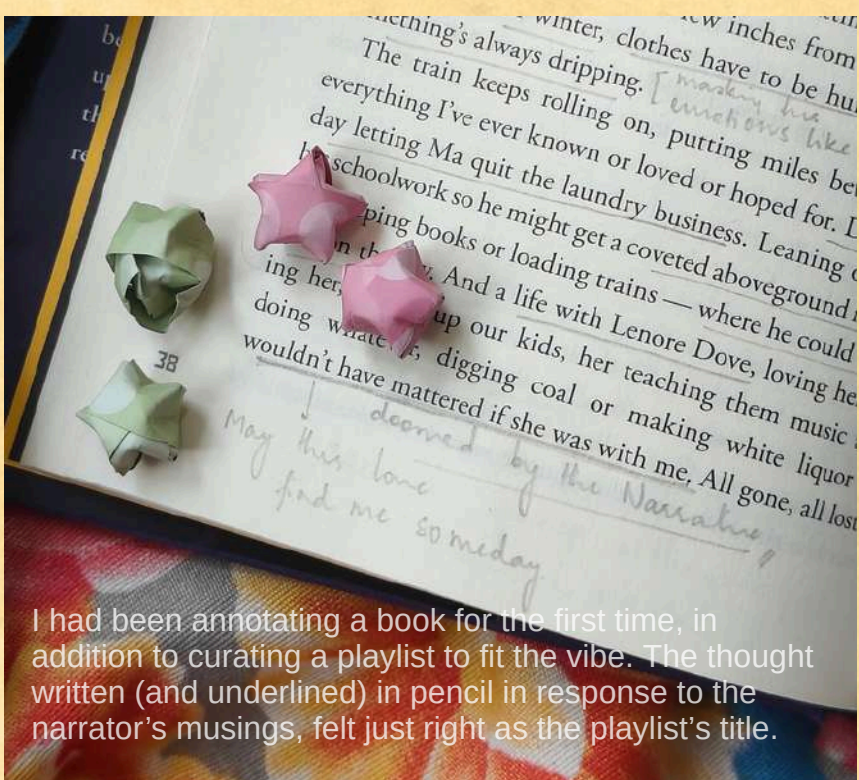
I had a Pathology exam at 9 AM and was up early doing a final revision. Since our room is east-facing, sunlight (or "dhoop") only visits us in the early morning when we're both usually asleep. But that day, I caught it. And for a second, I felt a little sad, thinking about all the sunrises I've missed.

Insomnia is a welcome friend during exam season. And I guess its fine to stay up late on the weekend? Usually when I'm still awake past 5, I give up on sleep and just watch the sky. The colors shift slowly through the frosted windows, birds begin to stir, and morning sneaks in. My mom would not approve, but there is something beautiful about it.

A photograph of a window with horizontal bars, looking out onto a dark, cloudy sky. A tassel hangs from the top of the window frame. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting late evening or early morning. The text is overlaid on the top left of the image.

Photographs
by samira

**MAY THIS
LOVE FIND
ME SOMEDAY**



5.13 AM

We had spent the better part of an hour in the pouring rain waiting for our turn on the ferry that would take us across the Lake District, when a woman with two dogs showed up. She threw a stick in the water and the smaller black dog dove in after it. It emerged triumphant, stick clutched proudly in his mouth; despite the frigid swim it just took. The sight raised my spirits a bit that always seem to fall when the weather is gloomy.

WINDERMERE





LOVE TRAVELING THROUGH A WARZONE

Gauri

Flower vases out of rocket caskets
This feels like the old, homely and filled bread baskets

Smell of the burning dreams and present, omnipresent, very familiar

"This too shall pass" , so I trace it in the sand every night,
believing the conciliar

But maybe this spiral of
Recycled air in the room
Makes the both of us

The veins in you surely are cold
Though the impression on the pillow is warm
Recycled clothes, food and water in the room
Take my plans of nihilism by a storm

Sitting on the square roof with the fear of the exploding ground
Above all mundane existence
Discussing life beyond the sea
Away from the tank's cadence which infuriated me

The sky full of monochrome destruction
Maybe you are that purple eventide
Bring the bottle too
Filled with the recycled life.



I just love capturing things around me, more than myself. Whenever I go out I just start looking around and when I find a good frame, I click it. It's my second photography submission after a long time. Previously, my visuals have been published in the Paper Cranes Literary.

GOODBYE, SUMMER.

Tej
Nagar

All the summer fruits are vanishing from the market. The Earth has completed half of its prayer. Watermelon takes the fruit flies with it back to the soil. I didn't know that flies only hover over fruits that are exposed to the air for too long. Isn't that obvious? - Mother says. She cuts them into cubes for the whole family, and then she tells us to be careful of pineapples, as they bite your throat. I watch her slice the watermelon into two with a sharp knife. She murmurs in a hushed tone that when she was a little girl, her cousins would rope her in to play games, like breaking the watermelon into two pieces. There was no equipment, no sharp tongues or sharp knives. Her friends would notice who amongst them could make the watermelon bleed, and I'd laugh because my mother is very good at making connections between everyone and everything, objects and mirrors. I don't reply to her as I am consumed by my word bubble. I tell her that, and she asks me to not let every thought speak. I wish I could zip them up. Mother knows the answer, the how's and why's, she just won't tell me. I see the flies sitting on cut fruits, so I ask her if the last mango is still in town. I say I'd love to make a fruit basket of all the summer fruits, and she lets me. Mango is the king, like me, they'll still put a high price on me, no matter how rotten I am from the inside. I want to be like a mango, Mom. My mother laughs and tells me how I am very good at changing topics. We both share the last slice of our favourite fruit that summer has to offer. Goodbye, summer. See you next year.



LILAC PILGRIMAGE

Aditya

SUNSET BOULEVARD

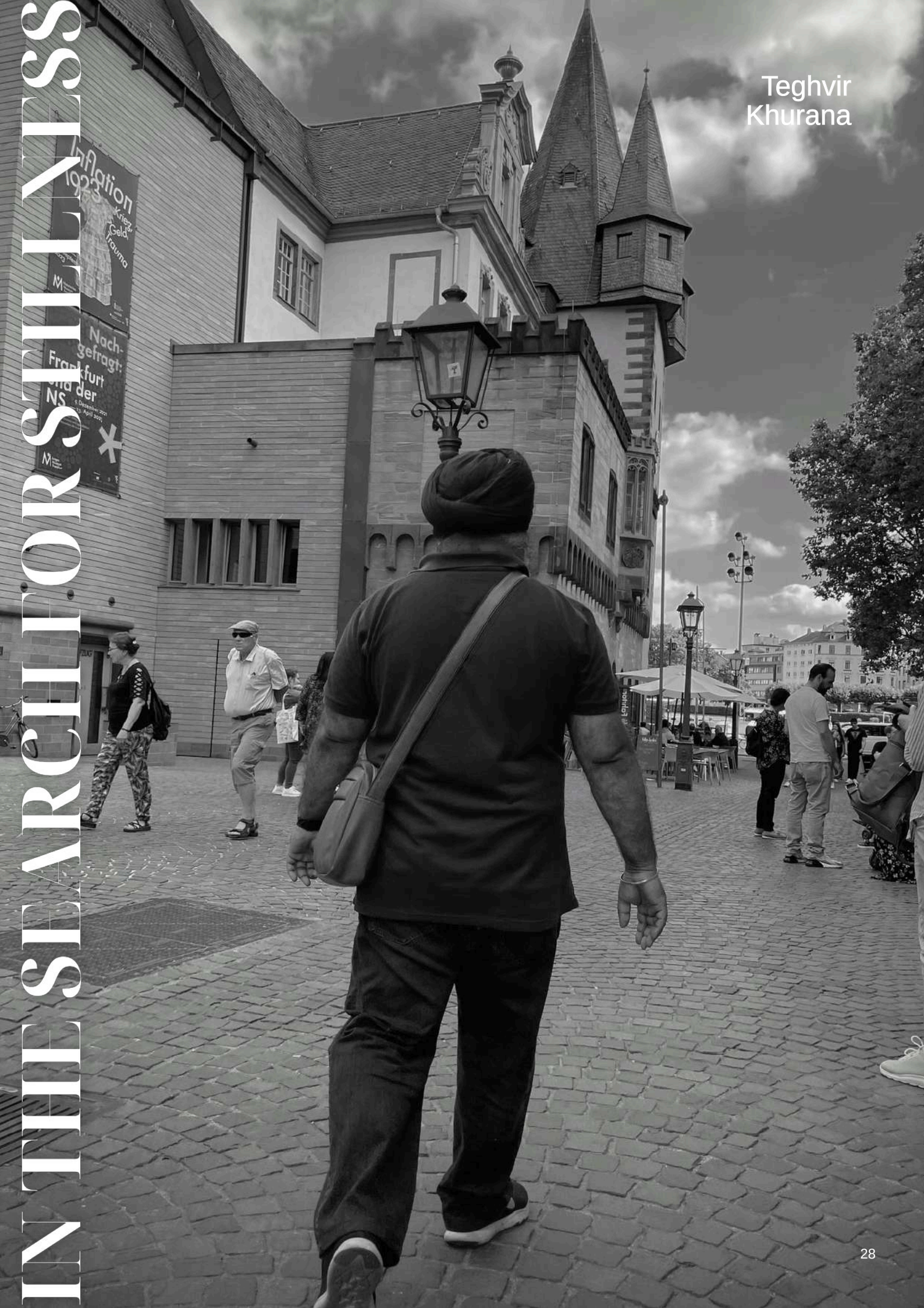




VERSIONS OF ME THAT MISSED THE TRAIN

Jassifat
Kaur
Khurana

1. The gray that never appeared in my hair at 18 because worry found different homes.
2. Clutching a Doctorate, smiling like someone who never questioned their worth.
3. Novels with my name on their spines.
4. Hands that never trembled when speaking in rooms full of strangers.
5. Children who have my eyes.
6. The same mouth that speaks truths I've kept buried beneath my tongue.
7. My body standing taller than I remember.
8. Wedding dresses hung in closets I never owned.
9. My self speaking Italian to a shopkeeper who smiles at my perfect pronunciation.
10. A face that doesn't flinch when loved ones raise their voices.
11. The peace of someone who knows exactly where they're going.
12. A home I chose.
13. Mornings where I woke up certain.
14. Shoes worn thin from running toward instead of from.
15. A voice that cracked for joy, not just grief.
16. The photo on my driver's license that felt like it looked like me.
17. Eyes that never learned to search a room for exits.
18. A place where I didn't have to earn my rest.
19. The one who left.
20. And the one who made peace with both.



IN THE SEARCH FOR STORIES

Teghvir
Khurana

THE ARTICULATED ROADS

Rythm
Verma

Asmi had always felt that roads spoke, though few listened. As a child, she'd watch ants cross cracks in the pavement and wonder if they ever questioned where they were going. By the time she turned thirty, had changed cities thrice, careers twice, and lost people she once thought she'd never live without. She sat beside a peaceful lake by herself one evening as the sky melted into twilight. A stranger with silver-grey hair, weathered eyes, and a wooden stick walked by the lake and sat beside her. He carried silence that unnerved her; he had neither a guidebook nor a backpack. Half out of curiosity and half out of the intent to break the ice, she asked, "Are you a traveler?"

His gaze was focused on the water's ripples as he grinned - "Aren't we all?"

After hesitation, Asmi nodded. "Well, I guess. Yet some people appear to know where they're going. I keep going in different directions, not knowing which is mine."

The elderly man chuckled. "Those who are still far from the end of their route are the only ones who profess to know it. The more you walk, the more you realize that life isn't always linear. It runs in a spiral. You revisit the same questions, but on a more profound level."

She stirred the gravel underfoot as she gazed down. "I lose myself sometimes."

"Indeed," he responded softly, "Lost indicates that you're still looking. People cease living when they stop asking questions and think that their journey is over. They camp at milestones and call it a destination."

They went on to sit in silence. Like a classic lullaby, the breeze murmured through the trees.

She asked, "Do you ever grow weary of walking?"

He gently got to his feet, extending his long-traveled limbs. "Of walking? No. I now travel with less weight. Instead of carrying answers, I've learnt to carry questions." Then, as silently as he had come, he departed.

Years later, Asmi found herself in another city, another phase of life, with another version of herself. She often thought of the man by the lake—not for his answers, but for his peace. She too, had started walking lighter. Letting go of the need to know what was next. When uncertain thoughts confronted her, she internalized them with a hearty smile, "I am not looking for a destination. I am listening to life as it unfolds."

RUNNING

Jassifat
Kaur
Khurana



RIGHT TRAVELLER, WRONG TRAIN

Srijan
Bisht

The rain arrived like a colleague whose company you don't really enjoy anymore. It fell rowdily on the tin roof above her head as the reek of sweat, wet concrete and polyester umbrellas made its way to her. She stood still, her bag forming a quiet puddle at her feet, its cloth darkened by the downpour. The 08:16 to Vasai was delayed, suspended somewhere in the labyrinth. She felt anger but the source of it remained unknown. Maybe she was angry at her father - but she barely knew him, how can she be angry at someone she didn't know? Maybe she was angry at god - for not giving her a chance to get to know him at all.

She was happy the train didn't come. What would she have even said to anyone if she had made it, what would she have even felt? A feeling so alien it made her skin crawl.

"That one's not your train," a voice to her left cut her thoughts.

She hadn't noticed him at first. He had the odd ability to blend and stand out in his surroundings simultaneously. An old man sitting on the cold bench, knees folded, shoulders dropped. He wore a plum-coloured Nehru jacket over a Team India cricket jersey. His shoes were two different browns. She cut him a glance but looked away quickly, unsure if he was speaking to her.

"I've seen it before," he continued. "It comes, it waits, but it doesn't take anyone who isn't ready."

She half-smiled despite herself. She was surprised that she wasn't peeved by this eccentric man speaking to her. "And which one are you waiting for?" He tapped his chin as though she'd asked something deeply mathematical. "I'm not waiting. I'm watching. Trains tell a story. You have to wait for one that feels like it's your own." Intrigued, she settled her bag against the bench leg and sat a few feet away. He smelled faintly of mothballs and mustard oil, like a cupboard that had lived too many lives.

"I'm going to a *tervi*," she said after a long pause. "My father's. I didn't really know him." Why did she feel comfortable telling this odd stranger intimate details of her life? "Ah," he said indifferently, not caring for condolences. "People are very late to their own departures, you know. I once met a man who didn't attend his own *tervi* because he couldn't find the right shoes." She looked at him sharply, unsure if he was joking. If he was, he didn't give it away. He fished a Parle G packet from his pocket and opened it with shaky fingers. The wrapper fluttered to the floor like an unnoticed leaf. She felt her tense shoulder relax in the strangers company.

"So, what do you do?"

"I correct train tracks," he replied, matter-of-factly. "Every track is in the wrong place. I just move them back, one by one. You'd be surprised how many of them are wrongly placed in the world."

"And when you finish?"

"I won't. But maybe the trains will start arriving where they're supposed to."

He broke a biscuit in half, offering her a piece. It was soggy but she took it anyway. The rain began to lighten as she sat there with the stranger - mulling his words over in her head, trying to make out if he was just blabbering or driving an important point home. Slowly, the platform shifted back to its regular rhythm. Hawkers returning, announcements commencing, a boy - his school uniform drenched, hopping between puddles.

She stood as the 11:04 Vasai local screeched into the station. "You'll find it," he said as he adjusted the lapels of his jacket and brushed crumbs of his lap.

"Find what?"

"The one that will take you somewhere that feels like home."

He gave her a toothy grin before he stretched, yawned and simply laid his head back on the bench, closed his eyes and fell asleep in seconds. She smiled and waved at him, but he didn't see that. He was already snoring. As she waited for the train to come to a halt on the platform, she caught a glimpse of herself in a puddle at her feet. A rippling reflection of the only person she had ever called family stared back at her. As the pulsing crowd rushed to board the train, she turned towards the exit. This train will not take her home.

WAITING



Jassifat Kaur
Khurana

**WATCH
YOUR STEP**





I just love capturing things around me, more than myself. Whenever I go out I just start looking around and when I find a good frame, I click it. It's my second photography submission after a long time. Previously, my visuals have been published in the Paper Cranes Literary.



ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

1. Aditya

Aditya is a storyteller whose work bridges the universal and the deeply personal. Through visual narratives and lived moments, he explores themes that resonate across borders yet speak intimately to the individual. Rooted in emotion and observation, his stories invite the viewer to reflect, remember, and rediscover their own journey.

3. Sanithyaa

Sanithya Jayakumar is a 21 year old educator who is also a hidden poet! Is multilingual and is still that one person who believes in making handmade cards in this generation of instagram stories.

5. Teghviri Khurana

Teghviri Khurana (he/him) made art as soon as he could hold a pencil, but photography stuck. A curious click during lockdown grew into a passion for chasing light, moments, and meaning. A third-culture kid shaped by movement, his work blends stillness, chaos, and nuance. Photography now helps him slow down, tune in, and freeze what matters

7. samira

She captures moments on her phone, everyday scenes that catch her eye, little things she finds beautiful. Lately, she's been hoping to find an old digicam, something simple and hers, but no luck so far. A friend recently encouraged her to submit her pictures to their zine, she hopes others might see what her friend sees in them. A medical student by day, photography has become a sort of gentle escape from her textbooks. She's also started experimenting with video edits set to songs she's been listening, guided mostly by a pinterrest-y vision. It's not about deeper meanings or statements; these are personal moments, soft and fleeting, preserved just because they felt worth remembering. Most of it lies tucked away on her phone, documenting rare outings with friends or family, frozen bits of time that meant something to her. One day, she hopes to show them to her children but not to impress, only to share a piece of who she was. Maybe they'll think their mom was cool?

2. Jassifat Kaur Khurana

Jassifat (she/her) is a Psychology graduate currently pursuing higher education in HRM. She contributes to multiple literary magazines, with her writing and photography featured in publications worldwide. When not scheming ways to revolutionize workplace culture, she's likely refusing to fold laundry because "it's just a metaphor for life" or snapping photos of strangers' hands in public.

4. Saachi Grover

Saachi Grover (she/her) is a curious and social person. Art, poetry and science, she's in for it all. Coffee and her people, all she needs for a good day.

6. Parnika

Parnika finds it incredibly hard to put who she is into words. Shouldn't telling someone about yourself be the easiest question to answer? Paradoxically, it is the hardest one at times, like it is right now. She's a sophomore at Ashoka University, studying English and Economics. At her core, she's a lover. She loves way too many things at once -- literature, twitter, behavioural economics, branding, and people. She's a poet, trying to leave the world better than she found it.

8. Gauri

Gauri is inquisitive about people around her but also loves her space. Gauri is compassionate towards others but not intrusive. Gauri is a natural helper but never imposes herself on others. Gauri is also funny sometimes

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

9. Kritika Singh

Kritika is a 19-year-old writer from India who loves programming and poetry. She has been published in several magazines and is the founder and editor-in-chief of The Cawnpore Magazine. In her free time you can find her reading books, playing piano and watching Netflix. She is currently pursuing bachelors degree in Mathematics

10. Tej Nagar

Tej Nagar (she/they) is a writer who has an inquisitive mind. They have a keen eye for art. They have published their own collection of poems in an anthology called 'What sails through a writer's dream' in 2021. At Tajurba, they aim to use their experience as an artist to grow and nurture their art.

11. Rythm Verma

Rythm Verma (she/her) is a dedicated staff writer, school counsellor, and counselling psychologist who brings empathy and insight to every story she tells. Passionate about mental wellness and student growth, she balances her professional life with a love for dancing. Guided by grace and spontaneity, Rythm embraces the art of living fully—turning each moment into a dance of purpose and joy.

12. Srijan Bisht

Srijan Bisht (she/her) is a law student passionate about law, literature, advocacy, policy, and the arts. On a free day, she's often found switching between novels, playing with her dogs, trying a new baking recipe or enjoying Parallel Cinema. Srijan would go above and beyond every hurdle the world may present in order to pet each and every dog she meets on the streets.

TEAM TAJURBA

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Rythm Verma

Staff Writer

Ananya Chhabra

Staff Writer & The Modern Picasso

where the world comes together,
where experience meets you,
where it's simply not a zine but a gallery of life and its undertones....

जहां दुनिया एक साथ आती है,
जहां तजुर्बा आपको मिलता है,
जहां यह महज एक पत्रिका नहीं
बल्कि जीवन और उसके पहलुओं का एक संकलन है |



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