KALEIDOSCOPE JAN 2023

THE VARIOUS HUES OF DEEPANAM

Poetry Evening, Roach Monster and more...
Hello, this issue was...tough. We were so unorganized and had no idea what to do. But in the last two days we finished everything as fast as we could. But finally, we’re done and we hope you like the magazine.

Credits
Editors - Aneeka and Lea
Illustrators - Nayomi, Lea and Sara.
Poetry Evening

Away Away, Far Away
From The Haunted Bay
Away Away Far Away
To Live And Die I Pray
Away Away From The Fray
From The Land Of Grey
Where All Is Prey
Away Away Past The Sea
To The Wind I Shall Sway
And Find A Way
To Strive Towards The Day
Away Away Fly Away
To The Golden Rays
That Warm You Up Without Delay
Let's All Away Away Far Away
To The Land Across The Sea
Where I Am Finally Free
And Won't Be Forced To Pay
Tax Fees

Ok, unlike last time I don't really have much to say about poetry evening this year. Last time I made a huge deal about this event talking about how I was not ready to do it and how I felt and blah blah blah. This year was a lot more... how do I say it? Oh yeah, normal. I feel like last time to make my article interesting I dramatized it and blew up its story. So this time I want to keep it simple and say what actually happened, not an exaggerated one stretched to make it long and interesting.

This time I just did it. I was nervous but I was not gonna skip it so what's the point in complaining? And this mindset changed everything for me. Last time I was shaking so much that it was hard to walk straight, this time I was scared only before the performance. When it was my turn to step onto the stage I was barely nervous, I don't know why but I even found it funny that I was reciting my poem in front of straight-faced adults.

So when I stepped on the stage I was not trembling from fear and anticipation, I was trembling because I was trying to hide my laughter. This really changed something in my fear of stage. I may have been crazy at that moment but it changed everything for me. I am still scared of the stage but not so much that I will be shaking before the audience. It is what it is, after all, if I mess up, I mess up. It's not like the end of the world.

-Turiya
When I was low, you helped me up
You lifted my spirits, you’d ask me “sup?”
I would go off my mind,
But you’d remind me of the grind,
Everytime I feel blind,
You make my thoughts aligned.

You’re straightforward, and very clear
And always very sincere, always been top tier
The world isn’t a perfect sphere
Yet, it’s still full of cheer
So I hope that if I shed a tear
You would be here, you would be near
And not like others disappear

I don’t believe in no fate
But I’m lucky I met you mate
In the very first gate
And I didn’t have to wait
Because you’re never late
You’re just that great
But let’s end this debate
Doesn’t matter if ya don't relate
I just love straight,
It’s my opinion so please don’t hate

All my childhood I’ve been called a geek
With all my trauma I wasn’t able to speak
To anyone but this one stupid freak
Whose tears ran down his cheeks
Everytime he heard me shriek
About my past when I was weak
People took advantage of me being meek
So out of the house I’d want to sneak
Into the streets where all alone I can sleep
At peace

Everytime I reached out to you
You’d decline it even when you knew
It was me who was blue
You were once so true
But nowadays I just can’t pursue
Cause I don’t know what to do
I have no clue, old and new
Belong in the zoo, stuck in a curfew
Wish you were here too
All the wrongs I wish I could undo
Wish my thoughts don’t stick to you like glue
The way I missed you, I wish you would too

But there are goals to achieve
And only myself to believe
Finally managed to perceive
That there’s nowhere to leave
No more need to be naive
All my happiness left to retrieve
Under a trickless sleeve
Realised there’s no time to grieve
So we improve and weave
The success and then finally, for once,
be relieved

-Kishore
It was a lot less scary for me. But only because this time, I thought my poem was actually good. It surprised me quite a bit. Because almost every time I write a poem, I’d end up not liking it or cringe when I look back at it. But this time, I told myself that I am going to put my 100% and make it really organized. What I mean by organized is that it’s not gonna be too many words in one line compared to the others, and also rhyming each and every single line.

I don’t know why rhyming is just so nice, it has such a good ring to it when you hear it. And I also kinda forced myself to write a long poem because it can get more stuff said. I’m not that guy who goes so deep into stuff and makes every single word a riddle because I want people who are hearing it to understand it in one go. And it’s just way easier anyway.

Being on stage was also not a big problem for me because I am pretty confident and familiar with it. And also, I think I have to mention that I intended for it to be more of a rap than a poem. Because raps are way easier to flow than poems... It’s hard to explain, let's just move on. And boy oh boy I thought I was done with one long poem, but no. Our teacher, Mahavir, strictly said two poems minimum each. But I only started writing 3 days before the performance. And I said to Mahavir that since my poem is pretty long, it can count as 2 poems. But he didn’t confirm my point till there were only 30 minutes left for the performance. In the end, he just said, “Write another poem now” when there were about 27 minutes left. Three precious minutes wasted.

I ran and turned on a computer and since I couldn’t get a topic in my head, I wrote about writing a poem then and there. And I say I did a pretty good job. Ignore my complaining about Mahavir at the end though. Also honestly, - I say this a lot but - the food at the end made it worth it. I’m pretty sure last time we got ice cream but at least this time we got really good cake. I got two pieces! But yeah, that’s pretty much it for Poetry Evening. Also, everyone’s poems were really interesting. But the cake was obviously better.

- Kishore
That Time

I remember that time I hated,
That time, where everyday was the same
Every inch of my body felt fated
To become a failure, with no one to blame
Every Time I was having fun,
I got washed over by hell
It felt like a curse, a bane, a spell

That time, where I felt so restricted
That time, where I felt so conflicted
With options that I didn’t want,
flooding my system
Yet the only thing restricting me was myself
The chance was there and I’ve missed ‘em
The options I thought I didn’t want, off the shelf
But I realise, sitting on this bed, wide awake
I didn’t not want those options, I was lazy
Excuses, excuses I make

It all felt like a lukewarm dream
I was really happy, just scared
The future could hold my blood curdling scream
I just need to, prepare
Yet it was so hard to get off my bed
So hard to stay properly fed
So hard to try to get ahead
So hard to ignore all my dread
So difficult to even stay afloat
So difficult to write a simple note
What happened to me?
Who did I become?
Who was to blame for all that I have done

I wanted to improve, I wanted change
But all I prove is, It’s out of range
The more I try, The better I get
But the devils third eye, brings back my dept
The years I’ve spent, Binding myself down
The tears I’ve pent, Searching for the crown
The crown of loyalty, to the idea of failure
The mask I bring, to hide my behaviour

The more I partake, The less I awake
I’m luckier than most, yet still I break
Unhappiness doesn’t power me,
Happiness does, it just shares it fear
It creates a huge buzz

But that night, that time, that moment, that fall
I walked through the street lights, experienced it all
I wasn’t doing anything, I did nothing to change
And I expected something, I found it strange
That I wasn’t improving, I wasn’t evolving
I Couldn’t figure it out, I wasn’t solving
But that night, that fall
That song, that call
That cold breeze against my face, explained it all
I stand, I fall, I wake, I break, I stop, I start,
Then hug, my heart

23 and happy, flying free like a bird
Soaring through the skies, the low down is blurred
As I look back behind me, I look at my mistakes
As those back remind me, I’ve lived in a great lake
Growth is a process I hate and I love
Now I’m on top of it, watching from above

- Ren
The autumn wind blows  
Golden leaves fall  
I stand still  
As the monster crawls  
Living under my bed  
Eating up my thoughts  
Gobbling up my pain  
Driving me insane.

I look up at the sky  
It’s 10AM  
But no sun up above  
I walk around  
Nobody’s here  
It’s a grave of dead dreams  
Which do I save  
This is confusing so much suffering  
Is this ever going to end?

It’s been some time  
I’m not prepared  
For what’s coming ahead

Finally the sun rises  
I wake up  
And realize  
That this, was all a dream.

I hate this task  
It makes me cry  
Cause poetry is not my type  
It makes me sad to write this stuff  
But Bhakti wants it  
Now I’m stuck  
It’s not a hobby  
It’s a dread  
I’m wasting all my blood and sweat  
This is pure torture  
It should be banned  
To make kids write poetry by hand  
I am offended  
I’m betrayed  
By those who once made me feel safe.

-Aneeka

-Maiia
A flower that makes me feel alive
A flower like rose
that spreads love
A flower like lily
that spreads purity
A flower like jasmine
that spreads sensuality
A flower like sunflower
that spreads loyalty
A flower like black rose that hates
There are those flower all inside me
All the flower fills me

-Nayomi

A picture is a memory
A memory that can be kept for centuries
A picture is an emotion
An emotion that can be relieved
A picture is a glance to the past
A glance that is beautiful
A picture is a proof
A proof of being
A picture is a statement
A statement of identity
A picture is a moment
A moment that can be recalled
A picture is a story
A story that never ends.

-Sara
Coming down coming down
Through the wind through
the fire
Going left going right
On and on with no tire

Seeking help here and there
But in the end we have
ourselves
We can hear it in our ear
Like the loud ringing bell

Yet we do nothing
But do what they say
And when we are finally done
We don't have time to play

Hugs feel so warm and safe
they make me feel so damn great
As the initial warmth leaves
I'm in disbelief
My body aches and I feel green
My body itching and unclean
Touch feels gross and addicting
Opposites oppose my feelings
Torn inside out I stick to
scalding hot showers to wash away the unclean
To replace the warmth that i seek

We stick to sweet words
As they are afraid of touching me
Not blaming as I slap away their love
And touch profusely

-Aria

-Isha
Poetry evening is one of the yearly traditions our group holds, and it's something I always look forward to. To me poetry evening is a progress report. I look back on my poems and see how I can improve. I take poetry evenings seriously mainly because of how poetry tests you. Poetry brings out your language, creativity, and passion. It is truly an art and that's why I respect poetry evenings so much, you get to know the person from the words they speak, and the story they try to tell.

This year, I was a little lazy. Don't get me wrong, I was excited for poetry evening, but I also have a complicated relationship with poetry. It just doesn't come naturally to me and strains every single brain cell in my body to get something I'm happy with. And that's why I am always scared to start. However, I do feel like the poems came to me easier unlike last year when I was pulling my hair out. The performance itself was nothing too out of the ordinary, not too many people came, and the environment was less frightening. I did prioritize my speaking, because poetry is nothing without expression. Mahavir and Bhakti, our class teachers showed us some amazing poets and how they spoke with their emotions. Because I had some sort of reference it made it easier, and really helped me with my performance. Overall the experience was good as always and was a worthy last poetry evening.

My eyes reach the end of the horizon, 
yet I see a wall 
I stretch till the sky, 
but I still feel my body chained to the wall 
I breathe in the fresh morning breeze, 
why does it feel superficial? 
I have the world at my grasp, 
but I stay in a room that has no lights or laughter. 
A beautiful view is right before my eyes, 
but I still look at the mindless fly on my thigh 
My life has always been in open gates, 
and endless views, but I still feel a barrier coming soon. 
I sit in silence with the leaves still, 
but I am stuck with perilous fear. 
Is this freedom?

To catch a break I stay in my dull dorm room. 
I could walk with no limits, 
but I have closed doors for every room. 
I get sucked into the beautiful world of my phone! 
All my family left me and now I am all alone. 
Talking to people was always hard because I stayed in my little dome. 
I wish I could roam the world 
but then again I can't leave my home.

I have the world to explore, 
yet I am stuck at home exploring my fridge 
When I get nervous around people I fidget 
My hands and legs tremble in fear, 
As I think on the floor 
With outraging war in my mind

God is this you?

For this is, give me the freedom to stay at last. 
For I have too many barriers at my mind 
And I am still blind. 
Save me, could you?

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- Aadi
I wasn’t that nervous because 1) Sara was my partner for this podcast, and she is pretty interactive. 2) The people who did the previous podcast weren’t too scared. And 3) One of my friends said Bhavya is kind and easygoing. The idea of going into that room and sitting there having a casual conversation with somebody I don’t know for 20 minutes. And that that talk was going to be on the official Auroville Radio was what terrified me.

It was all great until we entered the actual room. I was terrified of what was lying right in front of my eyes. There were wires, everywhere. There was a thing with sooo many buttons, and it had like 47 wires coming out from it. There were three monitors and two mic stands. While all of this was quite overwhelming, the room itself was pretty small. Probably like 7 metres by 3 metres.

When we started a trial recording, I was touching the wires of a mic stand in front of me, and the lady who was (or seemed to be) in charge of saving and posting the recording of the podcast said, “No don’t touch it. It interrupts the recording with a vibration.” And I made sure to avoid it the entire time when, in the middle of it, I found my leg touching the mic stand... Silly me, I was so involved in the convo that I forgot about the mic stand. I was kind of terrified and immediately moved away from it. At the end of it, I said, “Okay, at least I touched it only once” And the lady replied, “You did it 3 to 4 times, but it’s fine.” Oops. At least I wasn’t terrified after the trial run because Bhavya was indeed, easygoing.

- Kishore

https://www.aurovilleradio.org/teens-connect-ep-2/

Teens Connect – Ep. 2
In this episode, current students Kishore and Sara talk with Bhavya, a former student of Deepanam. She discusses her experiences as an Auroville student and how they shaped her future goals.
"The Biggest Little Farm" is an inspiring documentary that follows the journey of a couple as they leave their city life behind to start a farm on 200 acres of barren land. They turn the land into a thriving and diverse ecosystem that produces everything from fruit and vegetables to eggs and honey after years of hard work and dedication.

The film not only highlights the struggles and triumphs of starting a farm, but also the importance of sustainable farming practices and the delicate balance of nature. The cinematography is stunning, capturing the breathtaking landscapes and the diverse array of animals that live on the farm.

One of the most compelling aspects of the film is the couple's commitment to their vision and their willingness to learn and adapt as they face new challenges. The story of their passion and determination is truly inspiring.

Overall, "The Biggest Little Farm" is a must-watch for anyone interested in sustainable farming, the environment, or simply a good story about overcoming obstacles and following your dreams. It's an uplifting and educational film that will leave you feeling inspired and hopeful.

-Mahavir

30 For 30

The idea of 30 for 30 came after reading James Clear's book 'The Atomic habits.' The focus was on building good habits with a clear goal. Students were asked to select the area they want to improve on and then work everyday for 30 minutes for 30 days. Also, to state their plan to a friend or a family member about it. This makes it more difficult to quit.

30 days of 30 minutes per day is 900 total minutes of effort. This small, consistent daily focus can compound over time to create significant results. Students share their effort to follow the plan they made for themselves and whether it worked for their benefit. They also share how much difficult it was to have follow it up in this day and age of short attention span.

-Mahavir
30 For 30 Experience

Where did all this inspiration come from? Of course, it's me. Actually, it was not an inspiration; it was a thought. And it's me; I think, and then, without letting any other thought take over, I write it down. And this is how I got inspired.

The idea of 30 for 30 was Mahavir's, and he asked us all to try it. "For 30 days, you should do an activity for 30 minutes." How was I going to manage that with my busy schedule of sleep, eat, sleep, eat, and repeat? But then I thought, why not give it a shot? After that, I was at a loss for what to do. I thought and thought, and then I remembered my new hobby, which was stuck behind my brain. that I found on a poetry evening. I wrote that idea down on a piece of paper that Mahavir had given us. To make it more challenging, I said, "I will send you the poems after I write them." After writing and saying it, I realized that it would be super hard, but Nayomi was ready for the challenge.

But the very next day, I had a flight to Delhi. I thought I would write my poems on the plane, but silly me had downloaded movies and thought that I would write poems instead of watching the screen. See, that was a struggle too; the airplane is the one and only place where I can watch a screen in peace for three straight hours. When we arrived in Delhi, it was already late, but I was furious at myself for losing control of myself on the plane, so I forced myself to write a poem, but it was my beginning, and the beginning is always difficult. I sat down at 12 a.m. and wrote a poem. Sometimes I can be dedicated to stuff.

The next morning, we had to leave for my village. It takes about 10 hours in the car if we stop at a few relatives' houses (like 10 or 20) on the way. I can't write while we are in the car because I get headaches.

When I reached home, I realized that it was Christmas. All the kids from the neighborhood were there. Right after we arrived, I became a waiter, a babysitter, and a photographer. By the time we finished doing this stuff, I had to unpack, eat dinner, and meet more relatives. By the time I finished, it was time to go to sleep. Every day, there was another story. I could only write when I was sleeping.

But I was not completely honest with my poems. I did miss a few days. EXCUSES:

After a few days of not writing poems I found no inspiration to write, but then I recalled a message I read somewhere saying that “Inspiration won't come to you if you don't bring it“ Then I tried and tried, I guess, and finally I wrote four poems, but still many remained. I used to try daily, but sometimes my luck worked and sometimes not. Then suddenly, the holidays were over. I came to Pondy with a pressure I had never felt before. Then on the second Sunday of the year, I sat down for 8 hours and wrote 15 poems. I felt like I weighed half of what I felt after finishing. But I was very upset that it disturbed my schedule.

- Nayomi
Ah, improvement. Honestly, I can’t say I see major improvements from when I started 30 for 30. But first, what is 30 for 30? It’s committing 30 minutes of a day to something you would like to improve on for 30 days. And different people chose different stuff. I wanted to improve on physical exercise and reading. To clarify, what I had in mind as physical exercise was some cardio, and learning to shoot a basketball and a football professionally, or at least, try to. But I have to be honest, I did not do much of the physical exercise part. I only did one good session where I practiced pretty hard to try and kick a football so it could lift off the ground. And I managed to do it, I am proud of that. I planned to do a bit of basketball shooting practice, but um... I had to ask some person for the keys to the court (it was locked because it’s a holiday, it’s not an open court), and obviously, I didn’t wanna ask him because, well, I didn't wanna do that. So then I just decided to improve my football skills but didn’t end up doing that either. I only did around 2 hours of football practice and 2 hours of cardio... out of 15 hours (900 minutes).

Well, I say that 4 hours out of 15 is not bad. But my other option, reading, that's where we talk business, I read like a maniac. I read every time I had free time - minus the times when I went on Instagram and Youtube - and even before sleeping, my mom would tell me to read school books, but I'd just keep reading story books. I read for around 1 to 2 hours a day. And I read for 30 days, which is 30 hours of reading every day. So I basically did twice the amount of reading. Which is great for me. And I got to know what other books to read when I’m done. I think I’m happy with this final result.

-Kishore

For my 30 for 30 I decided to start learning 3d modeling. I didn't know anything about 3d modeling, so I downloaded Blender (A 3d modeling program) and started watching tutorials. Slowly slowly 30 minutes a day I started from the basics and then proceeded to more complicated stuff. And at the end I learned a lot of things like: All the tools in 3d modeling, UV editing, Lighting and Shading, Making 3d textures, Digital sculpting, basic animating. And with all that I managed to make this Runic Sword and I realized that I really like 3d modeling and I am still having a lot of fun with it.

-Egor
Yes! This was my first international trip and the first time I got to know we were going, I might have been the happiest person on earth at that moment. We were planning to go in March but then we thought that we could go on my little sister's birthday which is on 31st January. We thought this was a brilliant idea until we announced to Ekvira “We are going to Singapore for your birthday!!!” She STARTED CRYING it was one of the most iconic moments! We couldn’t believe it. Ekvira was actually sad that we were going to Singapore on her birthday.

Luckily for her and more for me, she realised she was being silly. It took her over an hour but she realised how wonderful it would be to celebrate in Singapore. We had less than a month to prepare for our first international trip.

We decided not to hire or go through any agency for planning our trip. We decided to make our own itinerary and reservations and bookings. We got to work immediately. A trip like this is good in one way because you get to learn a lot and bla bla but there's a bad side to it too, you don't get any surprises. During the planning, and especially through vlogs, you come to know what to expect. Nonetheless I did learn a lot especially about budgeting and accounting.

We left on the 27th and that morning I got up jumping and dancing out of my bed. I don't know why going on an international trip was so important to me. I remember since I was nine years old, I had been requesting my parents for a trip out of India.

We reached Singapore and my first experience of a developed country was our taxi ride from the airport to the hotel. From this first experience of the taxi ride to using the public transport and visiting the various attractions everything was new and different and lots of learning and lots of envy for all the girls carrying Louis Vuitton and GUCCI bags and Rolex watches and wearing clean white shoes on a metro.

I am not going to give you the minute details of what we did in Singapore, just the highlights. For me the Universal Studios was amazing and nothing like I had seen or experienced before. But the biggest highlight of the trip was my swim with the dolphins. I swam and got to know a twenty eight year old dolphin named ......It's the best thing I did in Singapore and will be amongst the top five most memorable moments of my life, I can guarantee that!

-Sara
I can describe my entire class as we tried to run Neem Tree for a day. Under-prepared. I was really really sure that it wouldn't be as hard as my teacher described. But boy it was much much worse. Our teacher had warned our class saying that some customers would arrive early even though we clearly stated on the News and Notes that it started at 10:30. We were all so confident that everything was going to work out. So we took things easy and went to our school right next to Neem Tree to collect flowers for decor. By the time we got back no one really wanted to set up the tables or number them. We were so distracted and lazy that when the first customer arrived, we had not even prepared the table numbers or put a menu at each table. Another fatal mistake was not taking a full inventory of all the food we could offer. There were times when a customer would wait for the food for thirty minutes only for the waiters to tell them that we were out. I got stressed out instantly. I was one of the first waiters and it freaked me out to have the customers upset.

As time passed more and more people came and it was time for me to handle the billing. Billing was not as stressful as serving. Though it was more crowded and orders were coming at the speed of light, there were two others who helped me with billing. So the second hour I was not really billing, I was just helping with the communication with the kitchen so we would not be left with extra or less orders (it happened anyway). My third shift was fantastic, I finally got to stop talking and smiling at people and got to work in the kitchen. I absolutely loved it, because I did not have to handle customer complaints, only the ones from my classmates which was a huge improvement. And on top of that, we were allowed to eat and drink as we worked which was great. We couldn't have full meals but we could grab a taco shell here and there and also have a soda now and then. The whole time I was working in the kitchen I basically only made tacos, tacos, and tacos. So yeah I think I am officially a master of tacos.

Anyway back to my experience, I could see that the people at the counter were getting crankier every second, which made it a little hard to do my job. For example, there was a time when I needed ketchup for a taco I was making and when I asked the counter for it they told me (to put it nicely) to get it myself. Now that was a problem because the taco order was urgent and with all the tables filled with people I had to go personally to each table to search for it. At the end of the whole thing we all got to have a bottle of kajimba each and I was the only one who got a frozen bottle. It almost made the whole experience worthwhile. But it was probably a good experience so I am not going to complain.

- Turiya
I already had some reference to what the cafe experience was, as I ate at the previous group's cafe, however, I came at a period that was calm and unproductive, so for this year I had the idea it was going to be a breeze, but I was so very wrong. Just as we got the cafe started and finished our decorations, playlist and cleanup, customers had already started to pour in. Our teachers, who were organizing the cafe, had given us a few instructions, so we were ready. A few lone customers ordered coffee, tea, the typical morning beverages and food, and we were already running around. I was the cashier for the first hour, so I took care of the payments and orders. Taking the orders and the payments was not stressful however, the environment was heated, people from the kitchen were screaming, waiters were screaming and even my partner was screaming! To me it's more of the fact that I can't work efficiently getting screamed in every direction.

Without a doubt billing was my worst nightmare. Right after billing came the kitchen. I found this to be the most rewarding because I got to make coffee, connect the billing members with the kitchen to get food, and do really simple things like, putting chutneys, and different condiments. Don't get me wrong we were all still a mess, but I was outside of the drama. Which was such a reliever. By now it was about 12 o'clock and was my last switch, waiting tables. When I started it was peak hour. From one table to the next people were taking orders, the people billing were flooding in orders, unable to communicate with the kitchen so nothing right was getting made and everything was all over the place. As the waiter it was so hard to see disappointed hungry faces, and that's not even the most painful part, when they call you to ask about their food you have to suck it up and say, “I am sorry.” I have a theory that if you count the amount of walking and running that hour, I would have walked a kilometer. Thanks to this experience I will never ever talk bad about restaurant workers because I can feel your pain.

-Aadi
Okay, I have a ton of things to say, so brace yourself.

It was a not-very-new experience for me because I have dealt with customers and billing before. But it was also new, I was a lot tenser this time. There were way more customers than I anticipated. Okay, I'll say what roles I was in charge of at what time and the experience of it. So first, I was one of the waiters, which was pretty chill about, except when I had to encounter some people that weren't very happy when I told them that some of the things on the menu weren't available. But otherwise, I think I did pretty well as a waiter- oh wait, I almost forgot about the interaction I had with the second customer that came.

It was nothing special at first, he was just a random guy ordering food. And I was his waiter, and when I went to his table the second time for something, I saw a drawing that looked absolutely fantastic. It looked familiar. But before I could stop myself, I just blurted out “Whoa! That looks awesome!” He was very happy to hear that. And he said, “Thanks, I was just sketching this place.” Ohhh so that’s why it looked familiar, he was drawing Neem Tree- sorry, Connect Café. And then we started talking about his drawing, and I noticed he mostly used one point perspective. Then we went on to his next drawing and the backstory of it. Then to the next one, and the next.

*30 minutes later*

We're still talking, and I think I heard my name multiple times, then 5 minutes later, two of my friends (or the waiters, which were their roles at that time) walked up to the table and said, “Kishore, we need you.” And I was kinda sad I had to leave him because it felt like only 10 minutes had passed. When I got back, it was already way past time to change roles. My next role was to take care of the kitchen. That went pretty smoothly, I made a lot of hibiscus soda and juice. Most of the time, me doing my role was making hibiscus sodas and telling the staff to make this and that. Oh, and one of the best things I made was the coffee. I love making coffee with coffee machines, it's so fun. And one hour later, I was supposed to be the billing guy.

Now, this freaked me out. I didn't wanna do billing, because we can mess up orders, forget to write stuff in the bill book, or even write something extra in the wrong bill. And since we're dealing with real money, I was pretty nervous. I was half right, we messed up some orders, but we held up quite well. And while we were billing, one of my friends tapped my shoulder and pointed toward a table. I looked in that direction and saw the guy I was just talking to, he was waving goodbye. So I waved back. And he was gone. Then someone asked me if I got his number. I told them I got his number and a business card. I was very happy about that. Anyways, then I was busy with a lot of screaming orders, and- you guessed it, making hibiscus sodas. Oh yeah, we also got to eat in the middle when we messed up orders.

There aren't many other things to say now, I mean, the experience of it was absolutely amazing. And I am happy that Mahavir, Bhakti, and Deven had planned this, because the food at the end was definitely worth it ;)

- Kishore
Working at Neem Tree was... Intense, to say the least. The moment I heard that we were gonna work, or at least try working at Neem Tree, I didn't think of it too much. It wasn't that serious to me, I did look forward to it, but nothing big was going on up there. I saw my seniors do it and it looked pretty fun, so why not try it. When the days started to catch up, I started to think about it more. I was a bit nervous about the billing part of it, because I had never done any practice. But no time for that because now it's the day of hell, we couldn't see how the billing worked until an actual customer came in, and it went pretty smoothly, really wasn't that hard. But at that point I had not experienced the stress of billing. Soon more and more customers started to pour in, And the more that came, the more I started to cry internally. It was mentally exhausting to remember who ordered what? How much? Did they get it? How many of those are done? While also managing the payment, keep in mind I've never practised anything, an experienced person would probably be completely fine. At the end of it, I felt pretty happy with myself, we messed up a few times but mostly, we managed fine, I would say. It was a great experience and I'm happy I did it.

- Ren
Have you ever felt a cockroach inside your ear? Have you ever heard about it? If you haven’t, you are extremely lucky because this year my new year started with a bummer!

On 15/01/2023 at 1:00am I woke up screaming that I felt something in my ear and my ear was hurting very badly. My mother immediately woke up and tried checking with a torch but she didn’t see anything. She realised that the “thing” was deep inside my ear which was not good news. The “thing” started moving in my ear and it started hurting even worse and by that time I was crying and at some point even shouting. We rushed to our neighbour who had a car. We drove to PIMS and halfway to PIMS my ear had started bleeding too. At that time I knew only one thing: that the “thing” was a living creature.

By now my ear had bled quite a lot and that was not a good sign either. The junior doctors made me lie down on one of the stretchers and they put some saline water in my ear, until we waited for an ENT specialist. This wait felt like forever. Finally the ENT doctor came and just like an expert, with her instruments, in a jiffy, pulled THE COCKROACH out.

The relief I felt at that time was nothing words can describe. The stupid and disgusting creature (as the doctors call it: foreign body) was finally out of my ear. After checking my ear thoroughly, the ENT doctor said that the cockroach had scratched my ear but thankfully my eardrum was fine. So just a bit of cleaning and some medication was prescribed and I was on my way home feeling relief but exhausted and drained.

The funny part on the drive back home was that I knew that I would be writing an article on this disastrous incident. And I also wondered if it was a peek at how my year ahead was going to be like? But why, why and why... the answer to this I will never know!

- Sara