

31st November-December'23

JDSOLA's Independent Student Publication

# THE LIBERAL CANYON



# EDITOR'S NOTE

Hi there!

Welcome back to The Liberal Canon.

As we close out the year, we are pleased to present to you our combined November and December edition. This special edition encapsulates the spirit of the holiday season and the reflections on the year gone by. Within its pages, you will find a variety of articles from our talented writers, covering a range of topics

We hope that this edition brings you joy, inspiration, and a moment of respite as we transition into the new year.

In this edition of TLC, we bring to you pieces by Shavia Jalota, Mahek Tanna, Maithili Bachani, Aishani Shreshth, Hoor Azad, Amoli Nagpal, Meharpreet Gandhi, Ridhina Arora and Arya Rego. We hope you can pause and immerse yourself in the outstanding works of our writers.

Wishing you a wonderful start to the year ahead.

Have fun and Happy Reading.

Also wishing you a better Spotify Wrapped in 2024.

See you next month.

RIYAH AMIN



## Hinge or unhinge?

A 'sup?' dings on your phone, and you think it's a lousy way of communicating, yet you decide to indulge in banter (roast them because you want to like them) thinking you're holding your own but you really just got yourself attached to an effervescent internet connection that won't last more than a month but will give you weeks' worth of content to grumble about.

Makers of dating apps like Tinder, Bumble, Hinge and Raya have all hit the nail on the head because of people's loneliness, especially the loneliness faced by young adults. People like having somebody romantically after the teenage years come along, Ideally in a digital age digital connections should work, but something doesn't seem quite 'hinged'. The stakes in a dating app are relatively low, love is not a theme of the app by any means and more than 41% of the profiles are fake. Yet, In the rare occurrence of people finding love on the app, they find love not because of it but in spite of it.

First things first - why are people on these apps? I believe that there are only a few types of people that are on it- the ones who want to flirt, the ones who want to hook up, there to find 'love' or just are on it for the sake of the hype that surrounds it. It's rare to fall in love but everything in between is accessible, that might just be the unhinged part of it.

Dating on these apps doesn't feel like dating because of the lack of accountability. . You can let someone know you like them, go out on a date and just forget they ever existed. It's not fair play, it's very casual and matters of the heart being handled in this manner shouldn't be this broadly normalised.



Objectively, dating apps are superficial, I mean Jeevansaathi.com did it first and the stakes were much higher as the end goal was marriage and not a chain of dry texts from a frat boy. So, these dating apps are not the first of its kind but it's the first time seeing "no labels" being a large part of the dating culture. At the end of the day, dating apps sell connections not love, but the infatuation being expressed by looking at a profile has been mistaken as a stepping stone to love.

You go out on dates with people you match on the app, but all your eggs are not in one basket, you're always wondering whether the next guy who swipes right and has more to offer than the one in front of you, they might get a chance if this one doesn't work out, hence intention isn't clear anymore.

Ideally, it should be easy dating and finding love now because there are so many options, but because of that people find it hard to follow through, if that date doesn't provide you instant gratification you move on to the next, but little do we know love at a first sight isn't all there is to it.

In conclusion, it appears that dating apps are understood to be a desperate attempt at love, but I don't think an attempt to find love should ever be labelled as desperate. Yet, the functioning of an app should not be a decider of your love life, that would make it too simple and love has a reputation of being complicated for a reason.

-Maithili Bachani

# **IN A KITCHEN, WHERE I CANNOT COOK**



If weapons are utensils and stoves are the world on fire,  
how can I with a candle in protest and a heart in sorrow  
live with the guilty shadow of helplessness  
in a kitchen, where I cannot cook?

I have a thing for refrigerator quotes/ Everyday, I scribble one I think of/  
Today it is - "Stoves will light candles and candles, stoves"/ I light the stove  
and a reflection asks- "What's cooking?"/ under the candlelight having caught  
hold of my own shadow I ask its name and where it disappears/ and then it  
disappears/ only to reappear on the other side/  
The kitchen sink makes this familiar noise like a growling stomach- of hunger,  
of sunken dreams, of drained humanity, of children's cries//

The shadow, now distracted, runs to the kitchen sink/ I follow/ I follow all the  
time/

It sits on the floor when I ask if it would like to sit next to me/ it refuses to  
comfort me such/ Strange, 'Are you not a friend?'/ From a rack above,

I reach for a Parle-G packet/

It too shares the treat, almost devouring/ It never had to reach out for it, I  
wonder/

Pretence/Demon/ Thief/ Who are you?//

We finish the biscuits/ fed well?/ We walk back, feet in feet/ grounded to a  
sense of reality/

With the same difference intact/ until my shadow asks me- "Who are you?"//

WHO AM I?/ Am I what chose to cradle this shadow and let it grow/ Or Am I  
what keeps the kitchen dark to have the company of the shadow at least/ Am I  
the lifecycle of a thought that starts with existentialism and ends with a regret  
mixed in equal proportions with ease?/ Repeating till someone, anyone, can get  
hold of that thought and ask me if the thought was ever enough/ So I sit by the  
refrigerator light and daydream/ How often though?/ My shadow reappears/  
now sitting just beside me/ I reach for a treat from the refrigerator/ For oh I  
know how it loves to devour//

**Meharpreet Gandhi**

# Where'd the NFT go?

2021 saw the rise of the NFT. It dominated the digital airspace for months on end, coming with the message that the NFT could be anything, from ugly looking apes to six figure sales of original digital artwork. But then as quickly as it came, it disappeared into a digital vacuum, with it occupying almost no space in today's online media. So, where'd it go?

In 2008, the American economy effectively crashed. A scheme regarding housing firms, overly large and complicated mortgages, and unmistakably greedy bankers; a domino effect occurred, where one single bond faulted and the resulting cascade of events resulted in the market crashing, 1.9 million job losses within 3 months, an entire banking firm dissolving and over 3.1 million Americans losing their houses. Yet, the banks that caused this crash were unharmed as the fruits of their corrupt yet easy labor were gobbled up by the US government, who bailed them out and blamed the entire failure of the economy on a single banker who was sent to jail. Only to be let out on bail 5 months later.

While the economy recuperated, a group of people arose that called for a system that was less under the control of the government and stock markets; which could be directly under the control of the people who owned it. And the hailing grace solution was Bitcoin, arriving in 2009. An end to banks; it would be an electronic centralized currency, free from the control of banks and governments. Yet, couldn't annihilate the issue. In time many competitors arrived on the market, such as Ethereum, Binance and so on. This is the bedrock of understanding the true ideals of the NFT's.

To reduce the already massive workload on your head, I'll sum up the truth of Cryptocurrencies. It's a scam. Straight up. There's obvious self research you can do by looking at the history of it, but to be earnest, it is practically a pyramid scheme. The very real money that you put in gets inflated to massive values but that price is speculative and theoretical, as the value of the currency is not tied to a real life currency system like the Dollar or Euro. And so the only way to get meaningful profit out of it is to sell it to another person buying cryptocurrency, hence the expanding pyramid. It's buying worthless assets at a high price, hoping that you can sell it later to a bigger fool. By design, cryptocurrencies award those who adopt it early - the earlier you enter the market, the more of the currency you have, the more you can sell it to others trying to enter into it, the more profit you make. And the pyramid falls down further and further.



Non-fungible tokens exist within the realm of crypto, a digital collectible or artwork that can be bought using cryptocurrency. It came into the lime-light when in 2021, digital artist 'Beeple' sold a collection of his digital art for 69 million dollars, as an NFT. The following media coverage resulted in a boom of other online creators creating and selling their own NFTs for profit. There would only be one original unique copy and every other piece would be a fake. Sure, you can just copy paste a JPEG of an art piece, but it's not the original so it doesn't have the value imposed on it by the seller. This resulted in digital art theft, where people would put up other people's art for sale and say that since the original artist didn't mint the artwork as an NFT, they lost out on the profits that would have followed.

After a point, economists were confused about what exactly people who minted and sold NFTs were actually selling. Was it a copyright? A digital file of an image? Commercial permission of display? Bragging rights? Outsiders who wanted to cash in on the frenzy realized that there weren't people who wanted to buy more digital art, but a closed casino system, filled with people who had insider information which resulted in them and only them getting all the profits, while artists would get leftover crumbs.

At last people came to realize that the NFT was never actually about the art or the value of owning a specific copy of a digital item or the rights of a real item. It was always about the money, not what it was worth to you but what it may be worth in the future to someone else. It is the basic ideal of hyper-capitalists, the financialization of everything.

It's about being rich, of online finance hobbyists wanting to be ultra-wealthy. They want to create a new system where they are the new Bill Gates, where they can change the value of the market through their own will. And that can only happen if the digital currency that they made is at the top, whose digital stock market changes due to the sales of NFTs. And since they've made everyone believe that selling a tiny digital image will make you infinitely rich, they lure you into buying their crypto-currency. This is how they lure in the bottom line, people who believe they can get rich quick, but in fact have to spend more than they could ever make back. That's all it is. A scam to make the insiders rich and the outsiders poor.

As of October 2023, 95% of all NFT collections ever released are worthless. Beeple himself sold his art and within the same month, called NFTs a "irrational exuberance bubble". Even the insiders know how inferior the system is. It was a failing system even before its conception. -Arya Rego



**Arya Rego**

# Girlhood: homesickness.

I am tired of making my femininity smaller for every person I come across, making efforts to subdue what has kept me alive all along. I have grown up listening to the same artists who have taught me about all the ways femininity creeps up on you, regardless of how the inherent nature of girlhood, of womanhood, of femininity is seen as a transgression. You can try to portray femininity and its niche as "casual elegance", but that is the least feminine a girl has ever been.

Nails, not neatly painted, but chipped in their animalistic simplicity. Scars scattered across your knees; a symbol of your reprieved childhood turned into disillusionment. The sheer obsession that stems from changing up personalities overnight because you liked a movie too hard, that is what girlhood looks like, to dance to songs that make your heart ache, holding yourself in the dead of night because your angst tells you to. To watch the same episodes of that old sitcom and cry because they broke your heart when you were 12, and how it will take a lifetime to move on from what seems like absolutely nothing.

Girlhood is seen as an insufferable torment, which is not entirely wrong, but it is so much more than that. It's giving compliments to random girls in the washroom, seeing how it genuinely lightens them up and forever believing that God is a teenage girl. It's the urge to want every single girl you know and don't know to feel so abundantly full of love that it spills out of them, because girlhood is nothing but being sloppily stitched up by every girl you have met and loved, for they are the girls who will always have a home within you.

Your femininity lives on in you loving the color black, but reconciling your friendship with pink. In cuddling your best friends whenever you can, and not just on days when it feels too hard to breathe. In platonic and romantic hand-holding and messy eyeliners and dangly earrings that you once had to give up because femininity was seen as a weakness, as an afterthought. In spending your days on Pinterest and Spotify because that's your idea of self-care. In the cute mugs and bubble tea and correcting misgendering and tucking flowers behind everyone's ears, which is all to say, I am learning to live for my femininity more than I will ever live for someone else.

Aishani Shreshth.



# Homecoming

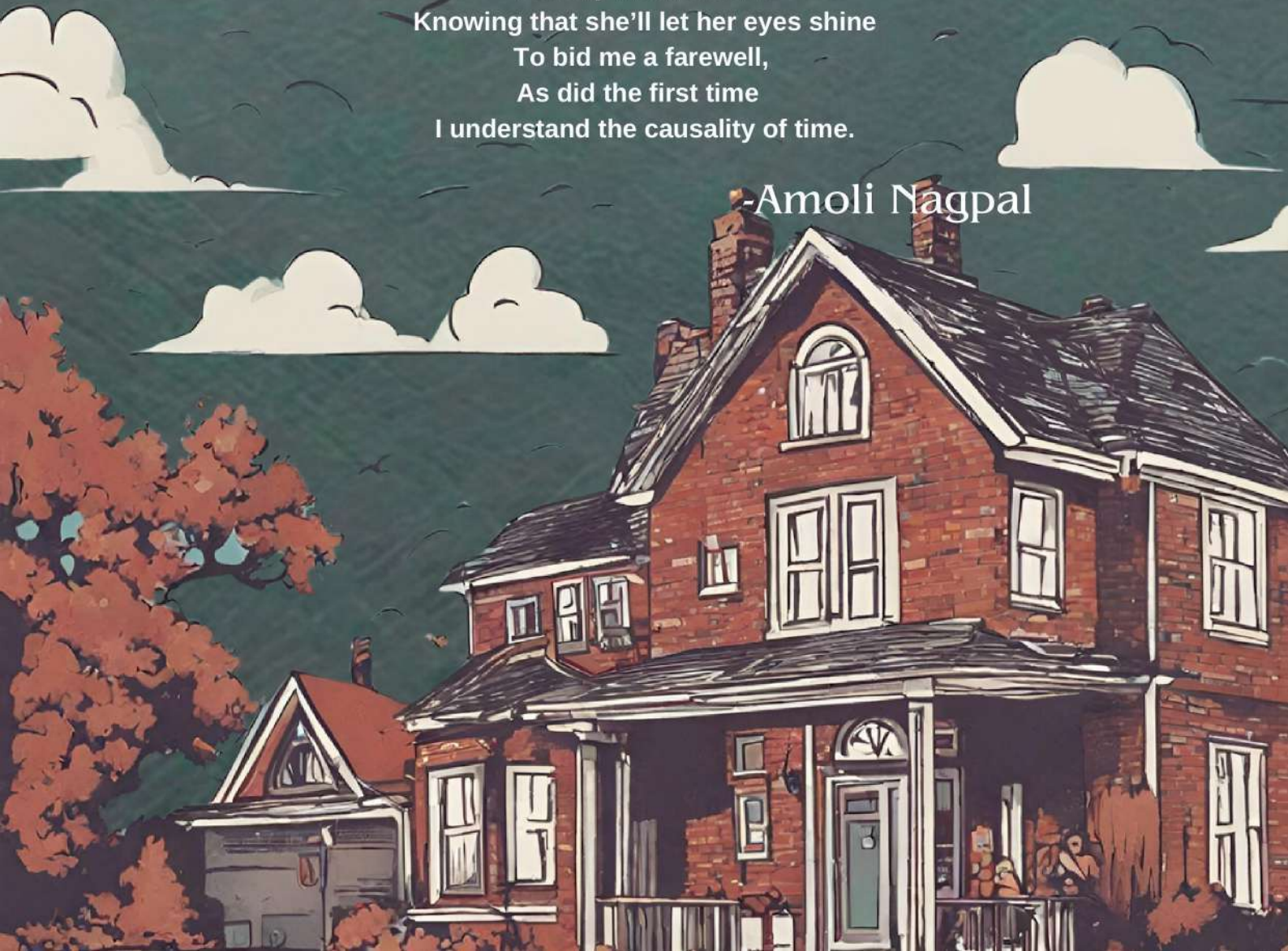
Today I sat there  
Where I used to,  
The short lived version of the sweet life  
Striked me at noon.

The album I saw  
I retrospected,  
How sweet was my brother  
How little was I.

I imagined  
my homecoming  
I've grown accustomed to it.

But my mom hasn't.  
Knowing that she'll let her eyes shine  
To bid me a farewell,  
As did the first time  
I understand the causality of time.

-Amoli Nagpal



# HOME TO HOSTEL

A little excited, a little tensed, thinking of my new phase,  
Deeply emotional, knowing I have another life to chase.

I realise as I leave my comfort zone,  
That I may suffer all my circumstances on my own.

Although lots of support and selfless love is showered,  
It's the inner pain of leaving home that can't be looked over.

My mind and heart fight,  
As tears have continuously been wiped.

To my mind, learning and growing seem exciting.  
To meet new people and to experience newness.

But in my heart—  
As I write in my favourite corner  
"You're going to miss this place a lot," an inner voice shouts.

To leave a place that you call home,  
And to receive the endless love of granddad and grandmom.

Still, the inner voice asks me to be strong.  
To accept a new phase and to move on.

-MAHEK TANNA



نا دنيا نے دیکھا  
نا جہانوں نے، لڑتے رہے  
وہ اپنے حقوقوں کے پیمانے پر  
لہو ندیوں سا بہا،  
پر امید کی روشنی تلے،  
وہ شہید بھی آباد ہو چلے۔

In a world that turned its gaze away, as if it were blind,  
People fought for their rights, their courage intertwined.  
Their blood, like a river, flowed with silent grace,  
Hopes shattered, yet they battled, in this daunting place  
They became martyrs,  
Their legacy of resilience, a testament to bear.  
For in the darkest hour, their spirits did ignite,  
And in their sacrifice, they found the endless light.

Hoor Azad



# The Light after Darkness

The lights of hope,  
Remind me to be strong,  
Remind me that I can win this battle which seems impossible.

The darkness of despair,  
Tells me that I'm weak,  
Tells me that I can't win.

The lights of hope,  
Remind me that there's so much time and so much life to live  
Remind me that I'm not alone.

The darkness of despair,  
Tells me that I'm losing time, and that life is very short,  
The darkness of despair  
Tells me that I'm always alone.

The lights of hope,  
Give me a reason to live another day,  
Give me a chance to see my own light shine.

The darkness of despair,  
Gives me a reason to die today,  
Shows me that my darkness can never go away.

The lights of hope,  
Show me my purpose.  
They show me my reason to be alive today.

The lights of hope,  
Tells me that I'm enough.

The darkness of despair,  
Takes away my purpose cause there is none,  
It tells me that I can never be enough.

# The Light after Darkness

The darkness of despair,  
Tells me that I'm broken and there's nothing in me that can be  
repaired.

The darkness of despair,  
It has made me take decisions that make my heart tear and give my  
eyes tears.

The lights of hope,  
Tell me that every broken thing can be fixed,

The lights of hope heal me as they steal my sadness,  
I feel the light outside, now within me, and I can feel and see the  
things it brought for me.

~ Shavia Jalota



## 25th December 3:53am

I sit 2534.573 miles away from Gaza's Al-Bureij refugee camp being bombed this very minute and my heart is heavy. My heart hurts seeing Motaz and Bissan's Instagram stories first thing in the morning and last thing at night, covering the hundreds and thousands of people dying, stuck under rubble, and breaking down every day. They are tired of being resilient over there, shouldering the weight of life, death, and immense grief. My dreams are full of them and my prayers hold their names, but I don't know what else to do.

This feels like a dystopian nightmare, one we'll be stuck in for a long time. Being so far away from the danger, I cannot stop but feel helpless. To have realized the magnitude of how small we are in front of political leaders, that no matter the number of protests and unrest, the governments do what they want, because how many more times can the US truly abstain or deny the motion of a ceasefire while the world cries out for it? To still go ahead and actively fund the genocide with taxpayer's money? When is the suffering enough to draw the line? It's day 84 for God's sake. The level of insensitivity is jarring and the sheer lack of respect for human life is disturbing. Now more than ever, the world is on fire and only the commoners are paying the price. But I sit 2534.573 miles away watching it unfold from the comforts of my bed.

None of it feels real. And it's only further distorted by Instagram's algorithm; posts of children of Gaza being amputated without anesthesia, newly turned orphans still searching for their ammas, and babas—are met with posts of people on their 2nd vacation of the year blissfully ignorant of what is happening, all just a scroll away. None of it feels real. The dichotomy on the same platform makes it seem like only half of us are privy to the terrors of the world, while the other half is in its safe bubble going on with life. None of it feels real. I am paralyzed by hourly updates of the death toll unable to maintain a genocide- work-life balance while the world moves on. None of it feels real.

Regardless, I post Instagram stories of poets describing Gaza- something that tugs on my heartstrings- and reminds me of my humanity. I put out updates on the newest area bombed, for no one or reason in particular apart from easing my conscience I guess.

Perhaps social media advocacy does 'nothing' to stop the war. Still, it does seem beyond tone-deaf according to me to choose not to speak out on the genocide but post photos of your fit check or the luxury of having delicious food or spending a great New Year. There really is some privilege to be apolitical right now. 30,034 people of Gaza are dead. The number is unfathomable, people with dreams as real as ours are dead and dying. So even if we're 2534.573 miles away, the least we can do is alter the comforts of our lifestyle by not gloating about it all over social media, talking about the very real genocide that is happening, and keeping the Palestinians in our prayers.

# CHANDLER BING

In memory of Matthew, known as Chandler, he's gone,  
An actor so brilliant, a talent brightly drawn.  
Millions mourn his passing, tears in their eyes,  
His character and charisma, forever be in our skies.

His life was legendary, his artistry so grand,  
In roles he embraced, he left a lasting stand.  
We laughed and we cried, with each character's grace,  
In the worlds he created, we found our special place.

Matthew, Chandler, both names intertwine,  
In our hearts and memories, his light will forever shine.  
Though he's no longer with us, his characters will live,  
A testament to the talent he had to give.

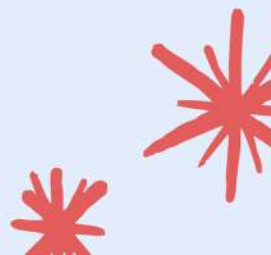
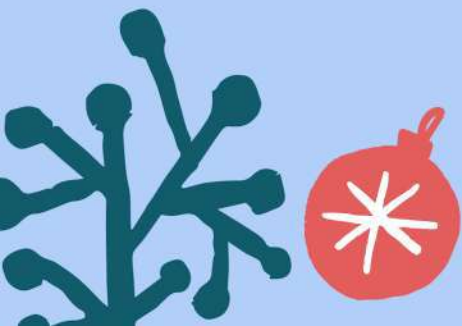
HOOR AZAD



# J&16 Loves

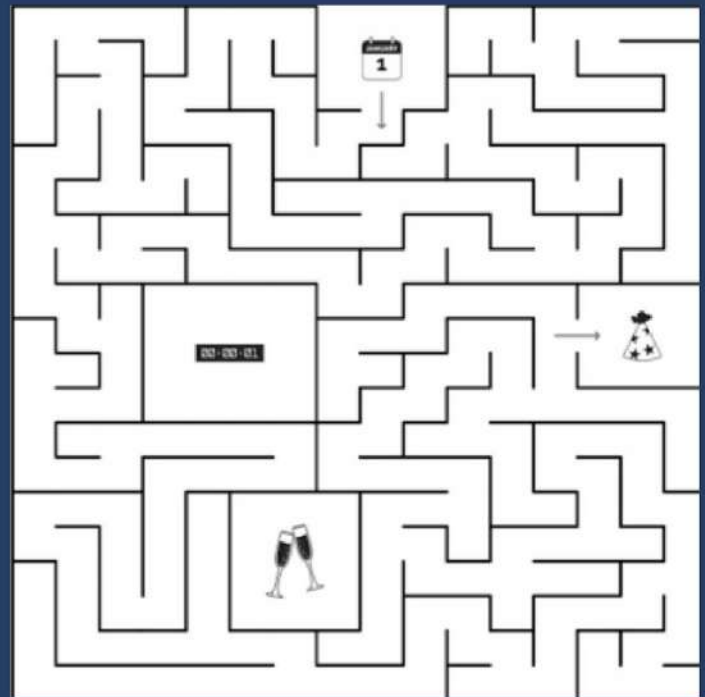


Movie Sam Bahadur	Book The song of the cell	TV Show Nearly Normal Family	Podcast Figuring Out: Raj Shamani
Take Out Grandmamas Cafe	Games Catan Take	Workouts Bodyweight Training	Online Course Learning how to learn: Powerful mental Tools To Help you Master Tough Subjects
Instapage @unicef	Bored Games Google's Pac-Man	Apps Quizizz	Online Shops converse.in
Mental Health Organisation Livelovelaugh	Sneakers New Balance 327 'BLACK'	Art The kiss by Gustav Klimt	Destination Udaipur, India





# Games & Puzzles



- |                |               |                |              |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| black hat      | werewolf      | skeleton       | mummies      |
| zombie         | hocus pocus   | boo            | boogiemán    |
| full moon      | witches       | jack-o-lantern | pumpkin      |
| trick or treat | candy corn    | black          | orange       |
| treats         | costume       | goblin         | frankenstein |
| scary          | haunted house | monster        | ghosts       |



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