



Surya Narayanan, XI A

The Article

Our class was the last to go for the tour. Everyone else went (and most of them came back too). At the eleventh hour came the District Collector's advice to avoid going to swine-flu-infested places.

Right now I am supposed to write an article for the school magazine like everybody else in my class. Well, here I go.....hmmm...looks like something is missing...what could it be?... A TOPIC!! What the hell am I going to write about? Think...think....GOT IT!!...got what? NOTHING! Maybe I'll write about nothing in particular..."Inspiration... find some inspiration..." my English teacher says...Inspiration? What inspiration? Frankly, I don't even know how to describe the word "INSPIRATION" using sensible English words and phrases...My hopes of an excursion with my

friends to Kodaikanal just went down the drain. Even if it was just a one day trip, going anywhere with friends would be great fun.

Our class was the last to go on the tour. Everyone else went (and most of them came back too). At the eleventh hour came the District Collector's advice to avoid going to swine-flu-infested places. (We were supposed to leave from school today at 7.30!!...mind it 7.30!!!) I could either have gone with my family to my native place (since a couple of holidays are coming up) or I could go to the tour with my friends...and naturally, I chose to go on the trip. Now, it seems like I am not going





anywhere at all... (My parents already booked the tickets this morning). But I pity those guys at MATH-IIT more than I pity myself. They actually fought with their teacher to put off classes so that they could come on the tour (or so I heard). How will they ever show their faces at MATH-IIT again?

HEY! Enough of this! I am creating a feeling of disappointment with my complaining. I'll write about something more pleasant and positive. I mean, there are millions of pleasant things happening in the world right now... Just look out of the window, it's a sunny day...just like it would be in Kodaikanal where we would have been, tomorrow, by this time...It would have been fun...HEY! I'm starting with the negative cloud again...

It's a free period. I'll think about a more pleasant topic in this serene atmosphere of our class room...WAIT! Something's amiss here....OUR CLASSROOM! It's

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never been quiet during a free period... I wonder what happened to these guys...Maybe they are just gloomy because our excursion got cancelled...I'm starting with the negative cloud again, right? I won't talk about it anymore!

Maybe I should write a poem. Nah, I'd rather not (If I'm boring you with an article, you'll run away from my poem). I'll look around for something to write about. Hey! There goes a big black ant. It could be a symbol! Nature is trying to tell me something...Think Surya, think! What could it be...HOPE!!! Right! Hope! The ant could be a symbol for hope because ants are everywhere and so is hope (that's what I heard). We may get another chance to visit a better place. What's that sound? It was the

sound of my friend putting a big computer book on the table... and the ant just got squelched under it. Maybe I should observe the ant's symbolism from another perspective...just look at ants...The way they move around, following each other in a straight line, like vehicles on the road...where our bus to Kodaikanal should have been in 6 hours... Maybe I should consider writing a poem.

One little
Two little
Three little Indians
Four little
Five little
Thirty little Loyolites
Going on a small trip
To a hill station
And the collector proclaims
"Thou shall not enter, swine-
Flu infested countries..."

Looks like my mind is pre-occupied with the excursion, I can't even write a small poem. Maybe I'll go to the library tomorrow and borrow one of those new Dan Brown books to get my mind off such thoughts. I heard that his books are pretty good. I wonder if Dan Brown had ever been to Kodaikanal? Probably not. We should consider ourselves to be just as lucky as him.

Did you notice how my article eventually evolved from a *topicless* paragraph to a long, slow moving essay on my disappointment with not being able to go on an excursion? I noticed it too...

And, there goes the bell. I have to stop now. I was thinking about what I should write as the last sentence...How about...NO...What about...that won't work...There comes my class leader to collect the articles and I can't think about the last sentence. Maybe I'll think about it later when I drink tea after school...Hmmm...I wonder if the tea I drink at home is grown in the tea estates of Kodaikanal...

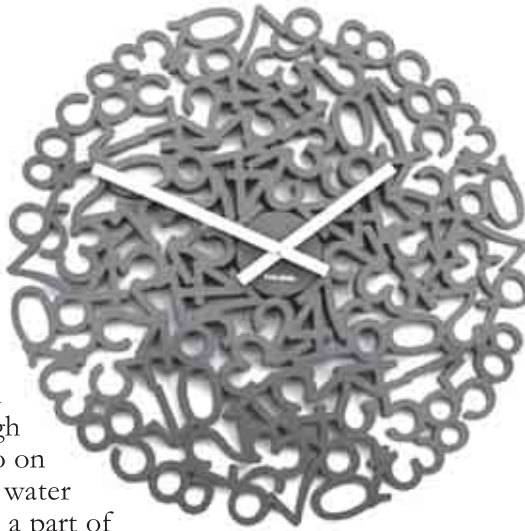
AS I LOOK BACK

There are times when you think time stops at Loyola. On some days, the clear skies of the evening let the sun play its way through the greenery that surrounds the campus before it falls on the frolicking kids. On such days, sometimes you can't but stand in awe of the high spirited variety of events that go on even after school hours. The water sparkles and generously reflects a part of the evening sun it captures. The evening seems to stretch on forever in this carefree world of bright young faces. Looking back, I remember Tuesday, 1 December 2009 as one such day.

I let my mind wander free in this glorious evening. A few of my pals seem to be enjoying the furious game that rages on in the basketball court. As badly as I want to join them, my over-exerted body does not permit me to do so. My game ended a few minutes ago when my legs decided to call it a day after two consecutive games periods. Maybe that's why I'm *standing* here. I'm too tired to move.

As I continue to stare into infinity, I am jolted to my senses by the greetings my classmates pass on to someone. I turn and look in the direction. It is Fr. M.M. Thomas. Odd, it seems. All this seems a bit of an abstract art. My free-roaming mind takes me to my very first memories in the school. Fr. Thomas standing on the top step reminds me that he was one of the very first persons who influenced my life in a very big way. Instances of when I created havoc in junior school flood my mind. Tense moments in the early years when I thought for sure that I would be thrown out of school now bring nothing more than a smile on my face. I raise my hand and hold my smile for Fr. Thomas. He lifts the umbrella that he carries, gesturing at me a friendly 'hi' and smiles from a distance. Then he descends the steps slowly.

The raging game that goes on to his right is least affected by all this. My relaxed mates on the cement benches stand up in respect. The birds continue to add to the evening sounds. Somewhere around us, someone lets out a cry of joy(?). On the ground above, cadets continue their practice. "Goal!" a



Niyas Mohammed, XII C

triumphant football player screams. All this, while Father Thomas makes his way down. And every step he takes reminds me of a part of my life in school.

I still remember exactly how our junior school used to be. A C-shaped building that seemed to take extreme delight in showing off its age-old orange bricks. But things changed. A smart CBSE block came in place of the Junior school building. A tall proud Indoor Stadium takes the place of a big dusty football ground where batches of Loyolites waged a thousand football wars. A few slides and tyres to swing on were eventually replaced by the lush green lawn embracing the Loyola Indoor Stadium. Father Thomas pauses for a while watching the





basketball match that will drag on till 5.30 p.m. when Madhu Uncle drives away the aspiring players much to their dismay.

The canteen, where we used to go to paint our tongues orange with an ice-cream stick, remains more or less the same. So does the pavilion above it. Seasons have gone by and expectant eyes in the shade of the Pavilion have witnessed the Sports Day. A dozen and one School Days I have been to, and each one holds a special place in my heart.

Never again will I wake up to my mom calling out that it's almost nine and that I have to rush if I need to make it to school. No more morning intervals that usually



end up as a classroom comedy show. Lunch breaks will never again be fun. Teachers will no longer run behind us for our record books. Adieu to all the basketball matches and those library periods where we blissfully ignored the solid engraving 'SILENCE'. Didn't realize I'd have to say farewell to all this back then...

"Niyas!" exclaims Fr. Thomas, who was now off the flight of steps and almost right in front of me. His white hair played in the soft breeze. "Remember, how you used to be, back in first standard?" he asks. I laugh. "Never thought I'd complete second standard here," I reply. We talk of events old and new. And then as I am surrounded by butterflies of nostalgia, our conversation takes an interesting turn.

"Tomorrow, three hundred parents will come with their children seeking admission in this school," he tells me. "Oh, yes I know", I look back at him. He waits patiently for me to grip the true meaning. And then, when it finally hits me, a soft 'Oh!' escapes from my lips. He smiles, throwing me back into thoughts at a depth I had failed to reach before. I was being replaced. Tomorrow some lucky kid will start his life in this home that I will forever belong to.

"Do you know any vehicles which have lights on top of them?" a rather big man with a smile as big as the

moon (whom I later recognized as Fr. Joseph Edassery) had asked me at my K.G. interview.

"Yes," I had replied.

"Well... can you tell us which all?", someone asks equally pleasantly.

"Ambulance, Police jeep and ..."

"and..?"

"...and BIG people," I finish my sentence tilting my head slightly to the left and looking up an imaginary BIG man.

Silence.

"...people in white dresses," I try hard to convey through my LKG vocabulary.

And then someone gets what I mean.

"Ministers", someone triggers off a chain laughter. Contagious as it is, my parents join in. Thinking I am wrong and absolutely bugged by the laughter, I accuse my mom of treason.

That day has epic significance. It was the day the Loyalite in me was born. A week later a letter came in from school. My parents told me I had got admission into Loyola. I asked cheekily what "addmishen." They told me I'd be going to school soon. I was happy. Soon I would attend a school with a really, really good playground.

The best thing in school, though, was neither the buildings nor the scenery. It was something beyond all that. Loyola has gifted me with some of the best of friends. I do not mention any names. Not that I don't want to. But years from now when I look back on this article, I'll still remember not one or two of my pals, but will have memories of the fun we had. If you've passed out of school, you will know what I mean.

Fr. Thomas waits for me to wake up from my reverie.

"You are now big enough to fly away on your own. It's time we took someone else under our care," he smiles. I can't but accept the fact. That day when I stepped into Loyola, little was I aware that I was kicking out someone who had spent a big fraction of his life in the school. We talk some more...with an understanding that we have built through the years. And then he says 'goodbye' and makes his way to the Jesuit residence. I watch him disappear between the bushes that block my view of the curved road he takes. And then I shift my eyes to infinity again.

That night as I lay on my bed, the wind gave way to silent rain. The thousand pitter-patter sounds on the roof seemed to me like the endless list of memories I have had as I bid farewell to my school life. My eyes get misty as I gaze outside my open window. The cool wind caresses me - like it's trying to provide me with some sort of relief. Yes, I am being taken out of Loyola. But try as you may, you cannot take Loyola out of me.

It does not go beyond thirteen

Rattled brains, piles of textbooks, derivations and equations, minds pondering on why Newton or Einstein was ever born to make them suffer all the while trying to crack IITJEE or AIIMS. This is where you would find my friends. No one knows the date or time but all they know is that time is not on their side. In the middle of this busy race, the time has come for us to realize that something dear to us is going away.

Yes, life in Loyola is about to be over and thirteen years have flown by and here we are at the gates of Loyola ready to bid farewell to our alma mater. Today when I look back at the thirteen years, I feel that they flew by like thirteen days. This beautiful campus, the grounds, the classes, the buses and the trees, everything has a story to tell us.



I still remember the day we set foot on this campus. From different places we came with tiny crying faces, different behaviour and different nature and began the journey towards greater achievements. We entered into each other's hearts in our own unique ways. The bond of friendship amongst us has only blossomed over the years. All my friends at Loyola will continue to be the eternal reminders of something special and the bond has grown so strong that even after leaving Loyola it will remain unbreakable. Youth Festivals and Sports Days were something we usually looked forward to because each



Sharath Rominus R. S., XII A

year saw the emerging of a *Kalaprathiba* or a fine athlete amongst us. The excitement of the Groom 'em Young competitions, the mind blowing dances and the thrilling relay races will surely be missed by all. The Loyola Basketball tournament, the one event that brings each and every Loyolite under one roof to sound their throats together in cries of victory showed the attachment and commitment each of us had to our alma mater. To this the School Days added something special to all of us.

Discussions about the excursions, the screams of joy when we won *Chris Gala* and *San Revo* and drama rehearsals for the School Day are memorable occasions for each one of us. Organizing LA Fest 09 really proved the unity, the sense of responsibility and leadership qualities we had in each one of us. The huge success of the gala event was an evidence of our organizational skills. The wonderful moments we had during our excursions will always be cherished.

My article would not be complete if I don't make a mention of my teachers. They have been the main stronghold all through our growth occupying the highest place in our minds. Their love, care and affection and the sternness when we went wrong put us in the right direction of growing as mature Loyolites. A special mention should be made of all our Principals who put us on the right path. Even though they were not teaching us, all the uncles and aunts have been very caring to us.

Perhaps it is time for yet another Board Examination and a series of competitive exams. Being swept by this wind we would reach some other institutions. But to think of a life away from Loyola with no more morning assemblies, classes, second trips or football matches is totally unimaginable but the inevitable has to be faced. With virtue shielding us and knowledge as our weapon, I think we are ready to face the unknown world away from the warmth of Loyola.





Rock-down MEMORY LANE....

It was in fear that he stepped into Loyola School. The hour long interview, which had drained the juice out of the five-year-old, was finally over. It marked the culmination of rigorous preparations that lasted for almost a month. Two months later he was officially a 'Loyolite'. Thus a new meaning was given to his identity, one that went on to define his being for thirteen years. And now I find myself on the verge of 'passing out', writing an article about it. All I can gather are a bunch of good memories that have probably shaped the way I look at the world forever.

I'd like to start with the question: "What was so special about all these years? Was it the sense of camaraderie that we have always experienced? Or the freedom we experience on the campus? Was it those wonderful teachers with whom we share a respect-filled bond of affection? Or the piously dutiful non-teaching staff, with whom we shared a good rapport? The answer eludes us. But there's one thing that's certain – it is because of this special sense of belonging that senior Loyolites keep coming back, year after year, not just to help their juniors out on special events like La Fest, but also to get together and reminisce about their days in their Alma Mater.

Looking back, the petty childhood rivalries, brawls that succeeded the football match, standing out of the Geography class for not completing the map, the tug-of-wars in the canteen for a bottle of sprite, the test tubes you broke and tried to hide in the chemistry lab and ended up paying twice the fine, all seem like good bedtime stories to tell our kids (?!!!). Even the gut wrenching moments you spend in the Principal's parlour, for making some mischief (only to be magnanimously pardoned after spending a really tense 30 minutes)

Arshi Asraff, XII D

and the time you cried your heart out in seclusion, for failing in math or physics, seem like moments to cherish.

Well, I guess a lot has changed both about me and the world around, yet a lot still remains unchanged.

La Fest '09 was surely a deserving end to our stint in Loyola. It cemented the relationship between us and our juniors. The sense of pride and belonging that we experienced when we stood together in one

enormous, yet tight human circle on La Fest day and let loose the legendary 'Sabse Aage....' is irreplaceable, in the full meaning of the word. The overwhelming sense of satisfaction after La Fest day was probably more valuable than trophy, medal or certificate we could ever earn.

But to realize that in a couple of months, we will be facing the much dreaded Farewell Assembly, causes a pang of separation

somewhere within. The shutterbugs will snap away, the albums will be aptly titled and uploaded in Facebook, slam books, embraces and parting-scene-one-liners will be exchanged....and we'll be gone, gone from a world that we have looked forward to each day. Since we first walked past those big cast iron gates, reluctant to let go of our parents' hand, as we channelled our lives into this strange new realm. The memories that all of us are proud to possess of our eventful lives here are like pearls we stumble upon in this thorny path towards our destiny. To be sure, the game is not about taking you out of Loyola, it is about taking Loyola out of you....and that is something as probable as Pizzas predicting the future!



Shutterbugs snapping away

Happy New Year 2010

To fell a tree in its prime,
Is to drive away rain.
To level a hill a day,
Is to erect walls of doom.
To fill a river for land,
Is to kill life on land.
To erect flats too many,
Is to add to the warming.
To dump waste in public,
Is to eat into public health.
To bruise and defy Nature,
Is to court our own death.

When shall man distraught
Learn from floods and droughts?
May the New Year bless us
With discernment and resolve
To save, to heal, and to serve the world.

Mr. Mukundan K.*



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We are not vegetables. Vegetables grow, mature and die, all on the same spot. They don't have to deal with different environments. That is probably why they lack personality. Unlike vegetables, we are always on the move. From the time of our birth we experience different people, different places and different things. These experiences mould us into unique personalities. This brings us to the curious case of the student. Going to school gives life and relationships a whole new perspective. The school is a new environment totally different from the home environment. In the initial stages of school life, the student does not differentiate between his behaviour at school and his behaviour at home. But he does notice the difference in the reaction of the people around him, and in course of time he learns to behave differently at school. The personality he has at school may even be a direct contrast to the personality he has at home. Both these halves of the same person can exist together only because the school environment and home do not mix often. The balance between these halves is severely shaken during events where both parents and teachers are present together. Initially the student experiences confusion, he does not know which personality he should exhibit. But this confusion gives him a platform to

Renjith R., XII B



think outside the influence of his teachers or parents. He unconsciously examines himself. During these events, he is able to analyze the faults and merits of each of his personalities. Through conflict and debate, both personalities start to become similar and finally they merge into one. If one is lucky, the resulting personality will have assimilated the merits of both the personalities. As long as we keep on doing new things, meeting different people and enjoying new experiences, our personality will evolve accordingly. As our personality changes, so will our outlook on life. If we were aware of the change, we would be able to obtain the maximum gain from these transformations. But very often, we only notice the change when we find ourselves smiling at something that we would not have smiled at previously. To let ourselves change requires an open mind. The student has no choice. After spending nearly one third of his life at school, it is impossible to prevent ideas leaking from his head. But when he shuts his senses to the outside world, he will have become mentally old. So, stay young and let the world change you.

