

A person with dark hair, wearing a dark jacket, is seated at a desk in a dimly lit room. They are focused on writing in a notebook with a pen. The desk is covered with a green cutting mat featuring a yellow grid pattern. A white desk lamp is positioned to the right, casting a bright light on the workspace. In the background, a wall with a white, wavy, textured pattern is visible. The overall atmosphere is one of quiet concentration and creative work.

ALPHA BIOGRAPHY

*poems
art direction*
Mohit Gore

Trigger warning: this book contains commentaries on **depression** and **racism**. Mentions of/allusions to **sexism**, **suicide**, **self-harm**, and **shooting**. Censored swearing used.

I will be giving a more detailed trigger warning on poems that have the above content, right before the poem starts. You can decide to read the poem or not based on that. Read safely!

Foreword

(I know the foreword looks a little long, and it is, but **please don't skip it**. I know it's tempting. I always skip the forewords. But I think we should get to know each other before you peek into my mind.)

Hi, I'm Mohit.¹ Writing a poetry book was not at ALL something I anticipated coming into my life. Much less my teenhood. Here we are, though, and I thought I'd do some explaining as to why poetry, of all things, drew me to structure this autobiography.

First of all, let me be clear that this isn't even really an autobiography. I haven't lived long enough for me to write an autobiography. I'm sixteen in high school! That's when most autobiographies *start*. Also, as Roald Dahl said, autobiographies are "usually filled with all sorts of boring details." This book, much like Dahl's own autobiographies, is not.² Think of this more as a poetry-based love letter to mental health. And other things.



¹ Pronounced **MO-hit**, not MO-heet. "Mo" as in to mow the lawn, and "hit" as in to hit a high score.

² *Boy: Tales of Childhood* and *Going Solo*

Foreword

What drew me to poetry was my anger. I had just had some of the worst luck possible for a student in high school. I was in sophomore year of American high school, I had the WORST POSSIBLE teachers for almost every subject³, each class was made up of STRANGERS who either disliked me or knew each other better, and I was having a terrible time understanding anything.

On TOP of that, I was attending a public school with a pretty grueling social hierarchy that I was at the bottom of, put there because of the way I looked. Haha Indian nerd, am I right? I'm sure everyone reading this can relate to being stereotyped in some way. It's not fun. I was made fun of or bullied a lot, so my self-esteem crashed and burned. I became incredibly insecure. I started to fail all my subjects. My grades were consistently either Fs or marked as missing. My life started to shut down and my feelings started to flow out cold and gray rather than in multicolor.

I became snappish and cold to my family and friends. I stopped talking in classes, and when I did, I pretended to be fine. I cried myself to sleep practically every night, feeling lost and miserable. For a while, I stopped attending school entirely, to the point where the school threatened to take me to court for truancy if I kept skipping it. I had very serious – and very tempting – thoughts of dropping out. How could I not? School was wasting my time! I was going to be a filmmaker and writer when I grew up,



³ No offense to them. I'm sure they're lovely people.

Foreword

what was the *point* of learning how to balance chemical equations, or any of the equally stupid and useless things they taught us? I was eventually convinced not to drop out, but I still believe that high school is genuinely a terrible place to be as a student. At least, my school was.

How does someone *get* to that point? Especially someone who had, for the majority of his elementary school years, been the happiest kid on planet Earth? Someone whom every adult described as impressively imaginative and articulate? Someone who quite literally did not stop smiling? I used to *talk*, too! How come I don't talk anymore? At all? How come I have so fewer friends than before?

This past school year, I felt worthless. Talentless. Certainly stupid, if my grades showed for anything. But I soon started to realize something: I was treating my grades as if they were an accurate measure of talent or intelligence whatsoever. I wasn't stupid at all... I was just bad at getting good grades.

Spoiler alert. **Grades don't mean anything at all!**

Think about it. Most English teachers would describe me as an average student, and I would agree, I'm nothing special. My reading analysis is great, but nothing insane. But I can write REALLY well. At least, I think so.

Foreword

If I get an F on a writing assignment, what does it mean? Does it mean that I'm stupid and hopeless at writing and should never try, because this mark on a sheet is shaped a certain way? Or is it because I didn't fit into the rubric? ⁴

Trying to grade anything based on a rubric is like trying to stuff a circle into a square hole. And using that as a measure of intelligence is like judging the circle by how many corners it has.

My self-doubt this last year was partially academic in nature, but it also concerned me and how I appeared to other people. Other people and their actions told me that I should be introverted. Insecure about my face. Desperate for attention. Romantically hopeless. Worthless.⁵

So how *can* a person insecure about their appearance spend an hour shooting a self-portrait for the cover of their poetry book?



⁴ Speaking of. PLEASE stop ruining my favorite subject with rubrics and charts and whatnot. Language has nothing to do with filling out diagrams or writing with a rubric. That's not how it works! School is brainwashing everyone into thinking it's *boring* when it's one of the most vibrant arts known to humankind! Same exact thing with math!

⁵ In the mood for a creepy fun fact? Did you know that if you add up the costs of all your body parts, you are worth \$45,000,000? It's impossible to be worthless! I think, anyways, Google it. I'm not good with numbers.

Foreword

How *can* an introvert even write about themselves for others to read? How *can* someone who is worthless and lazy have huge dreams and ambition?

The truth is... I was not and am not any of these things. Happiest kid ever, remember? These are assumptions *other people* made about me that I adopted. I don't have to be insecure about my appearance. I am not an introvert – I am actually just as extraverted. And I am most certainly not worthless, and even less so lazy.

I used to imagine a better version of my own world, where I was accomplished and happy. What if I was more handsome? More social? More likable? What if school was enjoyable? What if I flirted with girls or starred in movies or became a famous singer? What if I was a master chess player? What if I knew everything? What if I was good at everything? What if I...wrote a poetry book?

I started to spend more and more time away from Earth and on Dreamworld, where everything definitely wasn't *perfect* (that thought creeps me out), but everything was... better. There were challenges there, but they were the ones *worth* solving.

Foreword

But I couldn't spend all my time in my Dreamworld. My parents and teachers grew increasingly frustrated with me, and it genuinely felt like I was all alone. At the same time, my brain kept going "YOU ARE SO SELF-CENTERED! THERE ARE TEENAGERS OUT THERE WITH NO PARENTS, NO FOOD..." etc. etc. I wouldn't validate my feelings for a while, because I couldn't contextualize.

Towards the end of the third marking period, poetry caught me by the hand and tugged me deep down beneath its waters. It was a little aggressive at first, but now I think I made friends with it.

Mohit Goze

He/Him | 16 | INFP-T

Okay. Long sad crybaby backstory out of the way, **here's how this works...**

This book tells a linear story with poems – so please read it in order. That way you get the full experience!

1 / 4

There are **twenty-six poems** in this book for you to read and think about, one for every letter of the alphabet. Each covers a certain topic, idea, or word that is important to me or impacts my everyday life, negatively or positively. Sometimes, I will consolidate two or even *three* words to one letter, and all of them will work together as one poem. I use a whole phrase for one!

Do what you want with these words – share them, draw them, make Taylor Swift edits of them – do whatever you like, just please **credit me**. This is the Internet. We repurpose things all the time, but a "words by Mohit Gore" or something would be awesome. I've seen other artists' work be stolen before. It doesn't sound like a nice experience...

Oh yeah, and I'm going to use some pretty complicated words in this book. If you don't recognize some of them, please Google them, because I didn't use them as decoration. They mean something! Learn something new :)

Let's go.

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Welcome to the table! Please, be seated. What can I get you today? The contents of a poetry book? Why, that's our only menu option! Sure!

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Zenith

Click to go
straight to
the poem



Alone

I do not have a brain. I swear, I literally don't think I have a brain. WHAT IS HAPPENING

A whole crowd running in one direction
I run in another one to break the tide
I have my confidence and my pride
I deserve my life and my honest mind

Then they come in, homicide in my domicile
Their guns don't blast bullets, they spray ink
Covers my mind in a fuzzy black bit by bit

Gone is my confidence
Gone is my pride
Gone is my bejeweled saffron suit and neatly ironed tie



Alone

Maybe if I feed into it, I won't die
I'll follow the crowd, even if its a lie
The ink they sprayed covers up my mind
All I can think of is... why?

I want to laugh but yell right after
Measure my face's smile with a protractor
It reflects my death of hope after
My mockery is made equal part by me and my contractor.

What I'm saying is that my mind is a powerful tool
But recently it's been hijacked by many a fool
Who reprogrammed it to follow their own rules

My mind has betrayed me

Alone

Seeing faces in the knots of the tree trunks
Hearing voices in the whirs of the ceiling fans
And seeing holes when I look into mirrors.

I am living my life on a monotonous autopilot
But it's time to shift gears
Maybe for the nth time, but here it goes

I am no longer alone now,
Now there is a new way for things to run:
In the safety of my poems, far, far away from home
In a twinkling golden chariot shining brightly with the sun.

So I'll come out of my shell and close my eyes tight,
And once I open them the world will be right,

Alone

And sore eyes will see me as a nice sight.

But You're So 
For A  !

Fill in the blanks.

What was that? I don't think I heard you properly
With reasoning done so uniquely sloppily

Your reasoning could become an international monopoly.

Are you surprised, perhaps, that my depth extends further than the surface?
That I was put into this body for a greater purpose
Further than being your little Indian nerd to laugh at and make nervous?
Play your games. Have your fun. I will be your little toy for now.
Fast-forward sixteen years, you'll be wondering "how?"

B

But You're So For A !

I'll save my future self the breath, I'm conserving it right now
So I don't have to waste time then explaining to you "how?"
I know how now!

They say, you're so  for a boy!
Remove the last three words.

What, are you shocked we're not all vapid shells of humanity?
When you're a boy, compliments are a scarcity, smiling is a rarity
Caring is common, showing it is not

It's a double deal! A buy-one-get-one-free:
Buy masculinity, and get insecurity!

But You're So For A !

You're so  for an Indian!
Remove the last three words.

What, are you shocked I don't live below the US poverty line?
Do the things my ancestors went through amuse you?
Are you offended by my family's mystery-riddled history?
A history filled with liberty and much to see

Why are you comparing human qualities against constructs?
Race, gender, sexuality, status, personality, quality, beauty, it's all just in writing
You sound deranged, step back in the time machine
And hop back out to see the fifties where you'll fit right in.

Cover

Don't judge a book by its cover, or whatever

If I was a book, what would I be?

Would I be the picture book with the dying tree?

Would I be the comic with the man in the cape?

Would I be the nonfiction work titled *There is No Escape*?

If I was a book, I would be me.

Just me.

Since I am a book, what is my cover?

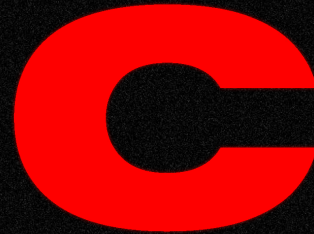
Is it the typical Caucasian star-crossed lover?

Is it the family with the father working as hard as he can?

Is it the nerdy Indian with as much personality as a pecan?

Since I am a book, my cover is me.

Just me.



Cover

But could the cover's imagery replace the prose?

And could the synopsis' highlights become the theme?

Could you look at the cover and judge the book, and say, "eh. That's all there is to see."

I don't think you could, but... I'm me.

Just me.

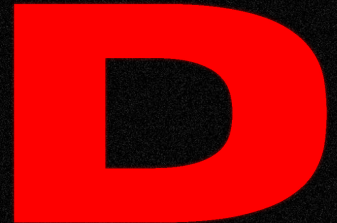
Depression

Trigger warnings: *Depression (duh) self-harm, and suicide.* Violent lines. Nothing insane though

WE'LL CARRY ON, WE'LL CARRY ON / *And though you're dead and gone, believe me* / YOUR
MEMORY WILL CARRY ON, WE'LL CARRY ON

Locked in a tussle with my mind I spend my time
Pondering the circumstances under which I mind my kind
More than once, it has occurred
I stopped thinking of others as humans
They are opponents.

I mask my anger with a smile
Applaud so loud you can hear it from a mile
Stand up proud and jump and down while



Depression

Seething in the injustice that I can't do that 'cause it's not my style

I get home filled with rage, I spit harsh words

I'm immature and sad

Too much ambition, too little time

I'm as egotistical as they get

Spending Wednesday nights fighting for my own life with myself.

I'm a brown waste of flesh and bones

While everyone else is sitting high up on thrones

Weakling of the week: Mohit Gore – cue the groans!

Turn red, want to cover up my face so that no one knows

Gouge my eyes out with three-foot talons

Feel the blood spurt out in gallons

Depression

Pinwheel my arms until I lose my balance

I hate myself.

Childishness marked as ambition

Shortcuts marked as creativity

"My brain doesn't work that way"

"I'm bad with numbers"

"My grades are just bad because I hate school"

Humor me for a second and imagine me

Using these excuses with the whole world's eyes on me

They'd laugh, for they know as the daytime knows when it hides under night,

That the life I am living is not the one to fight.

Depression

Whine about the school system,
Cry about racism,
I think the problem is you, Mohit!
Got that, little boy? Got that, you dusty waste of space?
I wonder how many trash cans you would be worth?

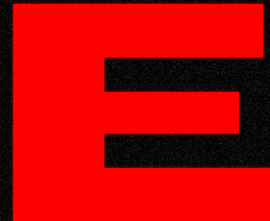
Who are you to ask?
Who are you to want to fix?
You're a mere mistake; a failed version one
The whole world is subconsciously averse to you
You are a laughable little boy
Go then, go now, little boy
Take you and your acne out the door
Oh, and leave your poetry book on the floor
Nobody will ever read the entire thing, it's a chore
Take the door marked EXIT and let the darkness inside you rot your core.

Empathy

My ethical hotspot can't connect to your brain. Weird... I wonder why...

My brain can stretch
It can bounce and flex and make a mess
Sometimes it can stretch to reach a mental fortress
Yours, actually.

But for some ridiculous doggone reason
I can't enter it. As if it's treason.
What do you do with your life?
Are you more than what you do with your life?
Is there more to you? I'm asking, because
I can't figure you out; it makes no sense
I can figure everyone out! But no, not you
Are you getting something out of being like this?



Empathy

Acting like breathing is criminal for a few people?
But not them all?

Why do you judge based on melanin?
In the courtroom, the judge won't let you turn a fella in
Just for having more melanin

You disregard my empathy
And I regard your failure to live a normal life
As attributed to your attributes, like the one where you're a racist
Or sexist, or antisemetist

Homophobic, xenophobic, your ideas are choking
People are starting to see through your inconsistencies
What happens when you're out and about boating

Empathy

Doing something casual

Do you realize you're a mentally messed-up sinner?

Disobeying the religion that you swear by

And tarnishing the good name that it shares by

Promoting the good causes it believes in

The only cause you believe in is a cause that causes others to leave it!

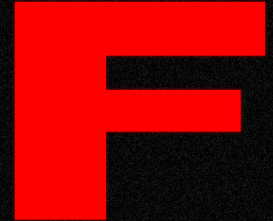
Films

"I'm gonna make a movie when I grow up!" – Me, December 21st, 2014

Media thrown at us from a very young age
From the very first moment, we learn
We learn anger and how to manage rage
We learn the alphabet and we learn not to burn
We learn concern and how to deter

Films are deliberate two-hour-long slices of life
From a sugared pie baked in memory
An adventure, a mystery, a covered-up history
A murder to avenge her, a character with motives
A film with the Avengers, a film with a vengeful spirit

Films are an escape into a world just like ours,



Films

Or a world that is ours, but the people are different,
Or a world where time has been shifted slightly,
Or a world that isn't ours at all
Or a world that is one of many worlds we see.

Empathy connects
To the characters onscreen
And your brain knows, clear as day,
The people on the screen are not as they appear
We are seeing a tiny part, the part that represents the story.

But somehow, we connect.
And that is the most miraculous thing in the world.
Why do humans create? There isn't any advantage.
But we have that ability, and we should nurture it.

Glue

My mental glue is rather like Elmer's Glue: it sticks to you and won't let go, and then you have to peel it off weirdly whilst all the other kids go "ewwwww" in the background

My hands have glue on them
My palms can stick to other palms
We can't let go on either of our ends
This adhesiveness gives me friends to tiptoe
Through the tulips with

Sometimes I feel like a lit candlestick
Light it at the wick, the spark begins
My hair would light first, then would my eyes
And my body – well, wax burns fast, so...



Glue

When I light up, the glue melts
All adhesiveness slowly fades away
My hands are facing down, palms pressing against the floor
My friends all **RUN!** at my kneel, I'm acting so cold

They see my glue and they **RUN! RUN! RUN! RUN!**
The overlords are thumb twiddling now
The flowers wither when they walk by
So the thumbs they twiddle with can't be green

My brain has glue on it
My head can stick to other heads
I can't ever unsee your thoughts
They say two heads are much better than one
Well, what if I could see yours?

Glue

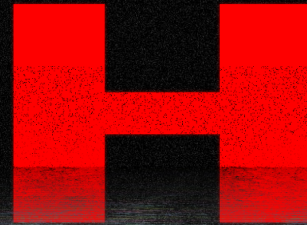
If I was bad, I could **RUN!** and bribe a ton for your thoughts.
But I won't.



Hope

A different perspective

It's a common trope to assume that hope will come to those
Who suffer through hard times and still get by
But for me, it makes sense
Cut from minority cloth, excluded from Versace thoughts
I had to go through hardship, heartbreak, hurt, and tears
To get to where I am now.
My life sucked.



Hope

But guess what?

Going through that led me to this book

And who knows where this book will lead me to?

I don't want to glamourize my life

Or minimize the lives of others

You might have it better, you might have it worse

But you are on this Earth for a purpose, just like me

If you see this reason as from religion, I respect it

Unwavering belief is inspiring

Even though I don't drive in that lane

I can understand it

And I see why.

I see you, thinking *isn't that not okay?* in your head but not out loud



Hope

Nobody saw it for what it was except for you
But me, I'm on the lookout for expensive jokes
The world is full of logical holes
My trypophobia acts up and makes me aversive to them
Maybe if I try really hard, I can spot these holes and change people's minds
The point of this book is to get you to hope
I hoped and it gave me this idea...

Let your hope stand for **HUNGER**, a hunger for change
For the world to recognize you and your beliefs
Let your hope stand for **ORNATE**, ornate flower gardens
Something beautiful to lose yourself in
Let your hope stand for **PRIZES**, prizes you will earn
They will come to you soon, your pain is a transaction
Let your hope stand for **EXCESS**, more hope than you can ever manage
So some of the extra can go to someone who needs it too.

I'm going to go back to my whining
Seems kind of funny that I just called it that
I guess I really feed into the hate
That's not okay
I should stop.

Okay, let me try – I'm going to go back to my... thoughts.
Not Dreamworld. My thoughts.

Inertia + Invisible

Sitting around waiting for life to happen to me...

Sometimes, I want to stand still.

Sometimes, I want to stand still and stay like that.

Sometimes, I want the ticking to stop.

Sometimes, I want the cover to write the pages.

Sometimes... inertia.

I remain idle like an engine stalling

I close my eyes and listen to the rain falling

And sometimes, I might hear someone calling

But... inertia.

It's a soft whisper that lets me sleep

And a warning of all the rewards I will never reap



Inertia + Invisible

It's cowardice; a reputational suicide
Is it good or is it bad? That's for you to decide

Could I just sit there in a chair
Pushing the ground with my feet to spin
Each onlooker with a constant grin?
They know that after all this time, they win,
Because the spice leaves my hair
And that is a sin.

but am I?
but am I that?
that who never reaches out, never inquires
never identifies every gem to acquire?

No. No, I am not invisible.



Inertia + Invisible

Sometimes, I want to get up and pace around.

Sometimes, I want to hear myself in my own sounds that surround.

Sometimes, I want to see my name at the start of the end credits.

Sometimes, I want to die knowing I have earned extensive merits.

The blank page can be scary.

The hardest stroke is the first.

Do not be invisible.

Make your mark and do your worst

Or a drug-trip is all you're worth.

Jack-in-the-box

It's hyphenated! It counts as one word! (I'm not breaking that rule again)

I am not invisible.

I am jumpy like a jack-in-the-box!

Wind me up, and I'll jump up and down

Sometimes I'm scary, sometimes I'm laughable

But all the time, I'm downright confident

I can't *do* nothing.

I truly have inertia – once I start moving, I can't stop!

Maybe it's my ADHD, but in any case

There's no friction on this glossy surface I call my mind.

I didn't stop when I wrote a poem – I wrote twenty-five more!

I can do anything! I am unstoppable!



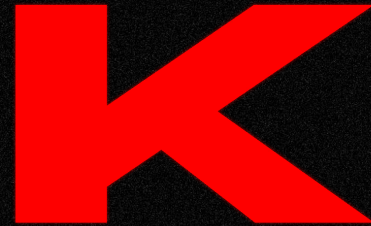
Karma

All this needs is a Justin Timberlake falsetto

What goes around comes around
The spinning of a saw blade coming to chase you
Happiness for inspiration, this raw trade will amaze you
Eventually the crowds will acclaim you

The ones who get to run this town
They do it well, don't let it faze you
Unless their grip is ironclad, then they will do nothing but raze you
Lock you up in a cell and chain you

Whether they are good or bad,
Happy or sad, rough or tough,
Amazed or displaced



Karma

Replaced or chalk traced,
They get what they deserve.

Laughter

At or with?

Am I walking right?

Do I sink deeper?

Am I blinking too much?

Am I thinking right?

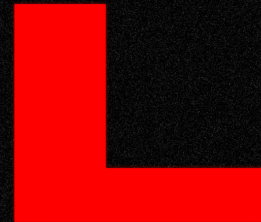
Do I lack courage?

Am I gripping too hard?

Am I breathing right?

Do I look good?

Am I moving too much?



Laughter

What did that look mean?
Was that a cruel sadistic side-eye?
Oops, sorry, I brushed your side.

Why are you laughing at me?
Who are you?
Have I met you?
Who are you?

Nobody else is being laughed at.
What did I do?
What is wrong with me?

I don't understand this language!



Laughter

How does everyone else?

What am I doing here?

Please, let someone speak to me.

Someone. Anyone.

Speak to me! Interrupt, please!

Why is everyone looking my way?

I'll just walk forward – why are you in my way?

Let me just go around you, like a normal person

Why are you not letting me get around?

Why are you laughing again?

I hope I didn't offend you!

Did I? I really hope I didn't!

Laughter

Everyone is watching.

Someone help.

I need something to happen.

Laughter

help me.

Laughter

please?

Laughter

oh

Laughter

i'll just leave, then
nevermind. i'm sorry.
i shouldn't bother you. i'm sorry.
bye

Mohit

We are exactly halfway through the alphabet and through this book. Let this poem act as a bit of an... interlude.

The name's Mohit, how are you?
What does my name mean? I'll tell you
But first, let's look at your name
Hater, huh? It's a nice name

I can tell you what it means, it's an acronym
But nobody knows that, so it's an anacronym
H-A-T-E-R is a backronym, it's easier to memorize
It's fitting you're called that, it's an aptonym

The H stands for hollow, hopeless, hostile, heartless
The A stands for avaricious and amoral, like your opinions on money earning



Mohit

Aloof and aimless, like your personality is when it's butter churning

The T stands for tattered – just like your soul

Tasteless – just like your goals


Tainted and tactless – just like your mind

And the E stands for emetic – it happens all the time!

You're gonna be an extortionist, an egomaniac

The kind of person who sees a scam and endorses it when everyone else divorces it

Everyone knows you're ersatz, but you're the kinda person who forces it

, that just reinforces it!

Lastly, the R stands for remorseless and repugnant

Darling, you're nothing but a rancorous reprobate, so say it out loud and proud, enunciate

Why do I care? Why do I feel? Why do I tiptoe as if I'm wearing heels?

Mohit

I don't have anything to hide from
You are merely a disaster to revive from
You can laugh all you want, and where I'm from
That kind of thing will make you no income
Incoming, Mohit Pradeep Gore!

That name is one fit for a master at their craft
That name is a proper one, it lets you sing another song
That name carries pride, power, passion, and purpose
Greatness and glamour fit for a king.

But let's break it down anyway
People will cheer for me any day
The pure excitement I feel, I can't convey
But let's break it down anyway

कुशा

Mohit

The M stands for mature, magnanimous and a masterful multi-hyphenate

The O stands for open-minded, optimistic, observant, obliging

The H is happy, hardworking, harmonious, and healthy

The I is informed, a lot more than you

Impassioned, a lot more than you

Incisive, a lot more than you

And indulgent, the complete opposite from you!

The T stands for thoughtful and tactful, and

Talented and tenacious

I'm everything bad about you erased


And everything good blown up so big it goes to outer space

I admit it, I'm bragging, but it's only 'cause I'm self-aware

Because I know you and I cannot compare

Mohit

The crowds will always eagerly stare and care about my lair
There they will find a note and a half-eaten pear sitting on an empty chair
A pair of hearts, a smiley face on the note
Wishes to move to a place far away
I wanna wear my heart on my sleeve, put anger to rest
Show the world my emotions, nurture theirs
I wanna change the world, and make it move
And put it to bed, tuck it in, say goodnight, and help it find its own groove.



If you've made it halfway – can I just let you know how grateful I am that you'd take so much time out of your day to read my words for so long? I really appreciate it.

-Mohit Goze

Nostalgia

In ten years, there is going to be a kid feeling nostalgic about right now, when there are kids the same age right now feeling nostalgic about something ten years ago.

Photographs on early iPhones
Bittersweet sepia tones
Slow computers with loud fans
Minecraft; electroclassical music and giggling

We were the same back then, now we are different.
You are better, and I am worse.

Back when school assignments could be coloring pages
Scissors had safety features
And we were given treats for being a good class
When they constantly told us "they won't let this slide in middle school!"



Nostalgia

They did. They did let that slide in middle school.

Back when I wasn't aware of racism, or sex, or swear words
I didn't know the world was bad.
I didn't know I could hate myself.
I didn't know I would grow up to be so quiet and antisocial.

I was loud, and funny, and slightly crazy
I had lots of friends, lots of fun, and lots of joy
Nowadays, I ration all three.

I long to go back
And witness the time when pop culture peaked,
when school peaked,

Nostalgia

when family peaked,
and when I peaked.

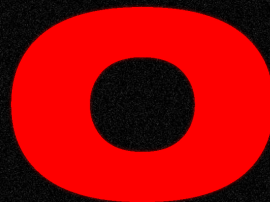
Olive

My mind is my fairy godmother

Locked in a tussle
With my mind and a bubble
Helmet slides on, cord is attached
Spacewalking in my consciousness.

It's
grey
in
here.

It's
dark
in
here.



Olive

It's
sad
in
here.

Wait, what was that? A flash of color?
Headshot from a twanging bowstring?
Or an arrow buried in the stump next to me
I can't tell! But it missed me.

A little bit of green, and a little bit of brown
Could bend it right 'round to make a thorny crown
It's a little too big, but it has my name on it
I'm just waiting for me to grow, but still
I come in peace,



Olive

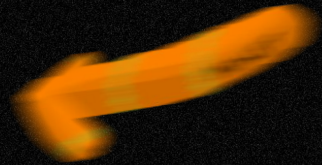
and I hold no grudges.

Imbided with clear blue skies and chirping birds
It's an olive branch, it sees my curse
And the back-and-forth thump of my words
It knows I'm more, but it tucks itself into my purse
"Some day," it murmurs, but I never forget.
I come in peace, and it's peace I won't forget.
I come in peace,
and I hold no grudges.

Too heavy to wield now, but what will I regret when I'm older?
Will it flare up when I'm speaking to my future daughter, when I scold her?
Will it get thrown into a binder somewhere, into a random folder?
Will it get angry when I misbehave and throw me into a zoo enclosure?

Olive

I come in peace,
and so I hold no grudges
Come one, come all, and see how it judges
The olive branch knows all!
If I fall, it can foresee how I will fall!
Except I won't fall, and I don't need a clairvoyant
If I start to, I'll just fall into the water, I'm buoyant
I can stay afloat so we won't be at each other's throats
Haul myself back ashore with stakes and ropes
Because I come in peace,
and I hold no grudges.





Phoenix

"It's a shame you had to see him on a Burning Day. He's really very handsome most of the time, wonderful red and gold plumage. Fascinating creatures, phoenixes. They can carry immensely heavy loads, their tears have healing powers, and they make highly faithful pets."
– Albus Dumbledore

The aftermath after death, what is it?

Is it a cold courtroom-based court case with a legal base?

Or a wrong-or-right quiz based on a wring of the towel soaking up your sins?

Or a locked-in mindset to unlock the lock of the locket with a key that sets your mind to bliss?

The locket of hair you last dropped

The expression on your face when you faced death

Your face is going to watch your watch's face

'Til you face your last second, 'til the buzzer sounds

'Til your taste of morality is over



Phoenix

Whether you're a old loner or a young stoner
The items you leave behind matter
What happens when you die?
There's no way to know without dying
That's a route we don't wanna go down again
The parade of death can't stop trying
To pick you up and just take you with it to play with you,
Away to a place you can't return to
A way to place you somewhere they can't reimburse you
Your life.

But from the ashes, the phoenix rises
And it just doesn't care
It doesn't follow rules

Phoenix

Why? That's as mysterious as death itself
But it just

does
not
care.

Quixote

They're giants I swear

Why did I write this book?

Am I going insane?

Thinking my writing can compare

Or my thoughts hold up

Who wants to read this?

Does anyone, really?

Why are you reading this?

Maybe you were bored

Maybe you were curious or tired

Maybe you hate it so far.

If you do, blame school. Actually, speaking of...



Robots

Trigger warnings: Mentions of **shooting**, **assault**. Nothing graphic.



Dear school, ~~fuck~~ you

Right at the crack of dawn
They walk in long lines that are uniform
And they spend time learning unit form
And they spend time learning nouns and verbs
And reading about history that favors the majority

Creativity is malnourishment
And reading is a chore,
Existing is exhausting and violence is prone.
When you slip up or cry, you are wrong
It is considered a sin to sing another song
Those who can't take it are labeled as dropouts

Robots

Either poised for success or of respect they are remiss

It's nothing like the movies

It's cold and sad and dreary

All art is gone

All pain is here

This is a place where sadness breeds

And a place where misery leads you to

Gunners shooting up schools around the country

Kids dying and parents crying

Sure, I can sit here and take the work

But I can't sit here and let this happen!

Every night they're wiping their tears with napkins.

But what am I to do?



Robots

I'm never gonna use math I learned past fifth grade
My vague memories of it: hating it and learning it
But never remembering it, just remembering to hate it

My flow of language self-taught, my love for it self-made
Learned more from YouTube than my math class
School is responsible for none of my skills
And all of my sadness!

The art in math, the beauty of its language!
All lost to the system and its word problems.
The excitement in history, the beauty of its bloodshed!
Dried out by textbooks ignoring world problems.

Unions preventing better pay



Robots

Dreams and souls of teachers crushed
LGBTQ+ youth shoved away and hushed
Students getting assaulted by teachers – quick, look the other way!
Maybe if we pretend like it doesn't happen
It won't.

The system has a vice-like grip
Every day instructions emphasized
To our brains they dullen and grind
Every student is the same, every superpower is to be tamed
Everybody follows the same textbook
We read the same words and monotonously repeat them
If we don't pay attention, there is a risk of the grades, to repeat them
It makes sense to double the pain

Robots

But it doesn't produce double the outcome.

Out comes homework, stealing family time
All to learn nothing.

Oh! And tests, they're there too!

More work to bore the young minds.

We're doing such a great job as educators!

But they're not having the best time either...

Teachers physically threatened by students and letting their dreams go

Denied privilege and rights they deserve

Forced to teach out of a biased and flawed curriculum

Even when they know it, they can't say anything

Staying up late night grading



Robots

Stopping brawls, raising their voice
And dealing with student gossip without a choice
Looks like it's not just the students
School is not a happy place for anyone.

So throw your parties, elect king and queen
Pretend student council is making a difference
Or the sport teams matter
Design your yearbooks, it's all the spirit you'll ever see
Press your brain down flat, squish it like a clay ball
We don't use those here
This is a place of robots.

Ask that someone out to homecoming
Because from now on, home you won't be coming to...



Robots

Eat with your family... have fun... nourish your mind...

No, no, no, of course not! Ha! How could I even presume such a thing?

Home is for homework! And nothing else.

School is a place of robots.

A place to become a trained chimpanzee.

You aren't "good at math"

You're good at doing what they want

Is that a real word skill?

School is a place of robots

And school teaches "real world skills" – so

Robots

The world is a place of robots.

Spice

This isn't really the kind of spice you find in the McDonald's Spicy McCrispy. But it's close!

People are powered by things
And some people are judged on those things
For some, that thing is faith
For some, that thing is living
For me, that thing is spice.

Spice runs through me.
It hardens to form the sand-like grit in the tangles of my hair
It can be rubbed out of my eyeballs, but prefers to stay there
It crystallizes on my skin when it is wet and dries to reflect my angry stare
Right back at me.



Spice

Spice powers me.

It is the force that pushes me to wake up when I know I have bad luck

It is the force that forms the creases in my frown and lets them get unstuck

It is the force that delivers insults right to my door in a gaudy green pick-up truck.

Spice empowers me.

It encircles my heart and keeps it ticking

Ticking, not beating, for my heart doesn't beat, nor is it a heart

It's a ticking time bomb in the shape of a heart

But really, it's a silver sand timer whose name is a lie, 'cause sand doesn't power it

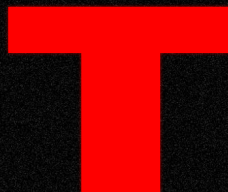
Spice does.

Trypophobia

So... about how I'm gonna be famous...

I know that my dreams are exaggerated
That I will probably never get to where I want to get to
But in my heart my dream is to be venerated
Like I said, I have to change the people I have met to
Change lives
That's no small order – it's as tall of a task as it is a tale

My mind is large; a surface to run over
Terrain to inhale and think over
But there are holes
And I'm scared of them.



Trypophobia

What is my life?

Doomed to be a lengthy YouTube video essay to be mocked in or a living legend?

It's one or the other, can't have it in-between

Mom's an engineer and dad's a programmer

I have no footholds in my industry

I have no connections in my industry

I have no experience in my industry

I have no inside knowledge of my industry

I have nothing except for sheer will

I'm scared that won't be enough

I'm scared of holes.



Trypophobia

My industry has problems I know I can solve
This industry has holes I know I can fill
But I can't.

Robot by day, romantic by night

My thoughts grow dark, it's not a pretty sight

Pondering my purpose, then I enter the light

Oh, right, my dreams are yet to take flight

I have not yet found the might to begin the fight

I grew up with media, what about kids now?

From here all the way to Moscow

The spark in kids has been lost, how?

Because they watch Dhar Mann and Cocomelon.



Trypophobia

Me? Ninjago, Thomas the Tank Engine, Henry Danger, and Amar Chitra Katha
DanTDM, Stampy Cat, Twisted Translations, and Game Theory
Trollhunters, Frozen, Inside Out, Cars, and Mr. Rogers
I grew up on Nat Geo Kids, they grow up on Skibdi rizz, whatever that is
I grew up a martial artist, they grow up a partial lethargic



Join the army, but they're
Never gonna be a marshall, except in the court with short blonde hair

And this is who we want leading our *next* generation?
The spark has been lit in me but their fire is diffused
All attempts to be creative are refused
While the CEOs just watch on, amused
But then they'll pull a Schneider and wonder why they got accused
And then we'll have to bid adieu

Trypophobia

I need to solve this, but the holes are too wide
School makes them wider, I have to confide
I don't think I'll join any of my peers on Cloud Nine
Waiting isn't an option for me so
I'll get in my canoe and begin to row
And that's how I know I'll dribble and ace that free throw
And so, risking everything and feeling low, to the stormy stars I will go.



Uncharted

Trigger warnings: Mentions of *self-harm* and discussions of using it for attention.

I hope you never find yourself venturing here

I'm special at last!

Finally! Special! Just what I wanted!

You think it's some quirky act to get clout?

That's a *u* move, *u*.

Self-harm, that'll lead you down a scary route

To you, it's an uncharted route, one to never actually go down

Your ego kicks in and you do it for attention

Others are not so fortunate to hear about how scary it is


To them, it's a viable path, a possible solution

They rub their eyes, blur the world with their contact solution



Uncharted

Depression is not some quirky temporary phase
To your heart, it will do nothing but raze
You're not cool for faking it, you're crazed

While you're out here whining about your "sadness"
There's people out there who go through this, it actually happens
It's not a fairy tale or a myth, a story or fable
You think that? , I'll shut you up in a horse stable!
Maybe then you'll have just a fraction of repercussion
It may be that you'll only realize this once you're unstable.

I'll end it here, won't go too far
Otherwise I'll yak on and on about the sky and the Northern Star,
And repeat on and on just to find who you are, but don't do that
You'll just lock yourself into a mental abattoir.

Venerate

Same flavor, different colors

Glasses; cello tape

Laugh tracks and –

Hello! My name is Raj [insert ridiculously long name]! I am a programmer!

Faux-Indian accents, genius intellect, he checks all the boxes so far... hm...



Weak-willed, objectified, now stand still and weep, perfect...

Cut! You forgot to look ugly

Well, we don't actually look ugly, Mr. Director

That's what you want them to see – oh, who cares! From the top we go!

Some white kid eating cereal watches this at his house

Seeing every Indian be a little mouse

Excitement and glee this will arouse

Venerate

Expecting every brown kid to have a ghetto house
Hilarity points at
The brown kid entering the parks
Kid cries, everyone laughs
He turns to his dad and says
"What's wrong with me?"

"Well, honey, some grown-ups thought it was funny
So they inserted this stereotype for money
So now for your whole life you will be running
From this."

To the image of a white girl falling for an Indian
Ha, the CEO goes, that'll never happen – what an idea! Belongs in Mohit's Dreamworld!
Every one of them is the same.

Venerate

They can't settle with sexist, they have to be racist too!
Let's make the best friend black, too! And dumb, too!
Or, wait – how about the lesbian girl best friend? She can be ugly and overweight!
She can fall for the main female lead for some reason (who has to be white)
And let's make the blonde girl rich and annoying
And she'll have an ex named Tyler or something
He'll be white to match the protagonist
And they'll fall in love, we're geniuses!

Uh – heh, we venerate these cultures we use
We respect them and stand with them. ™
We aren't abusing them, or subtly making fun of them...
We totally respect women... and aren't hurting them...
(Quick, get the legal team!)

Venerate

you
hold
power.

directors
hold
power.

use it for good. stop spreading harm.

You know what I want?

I want to venerate cultures, to use them well

Stop setting fake beauty standards; hunger is not beauty

Our women deserve more than this

If anyone suggests this, I'll toss them into the abyss, they belong in the past

Remember, in the fifties they'll fit in, but not now. Sorry!

Venerate

How about boys that don't just kick and shout? Our boys deserve more than this
Boys who love, boys who take care, boys who dream and read and giggle and hug

How about parents who are flawed? Our parents deserve more than this
Parents who mess up, have good ideas, are supportive and loving yet go through their own things

How about a girl just being *friends* with a boy?
A lesbian character just being friends with a straight character?
I want to make my characters gender-fluid and nonbinary
Georgian and Chilean and French and Zimbabwean
Funny and angry and flawed and honest
Break the mold and rewrite the stories
Get true, honest, valid opinions from real people to write them well

Diversity is not something to tick a box.
We need to use it, infuse it with purpose

Venerate

Inspire the next minds, spark their thoughts
"Oh, wow, what beauty," they'll remark
The difference between now and then will be stark
We'll help kids like me escape the dark
And send them an olive branch instead of a dart

No racism! No sexism, no homophobia!
We storytell by bridging gaps and birthing love!
Not hate!

So how about we try that...

Weird + Words + We

People can just be stupid sometimes, there's nothing wrong in admitting it

Once on some night
Somewhere, by some ancient right
Some law was provoked
A law with thorns

This law was said to be part of the universe's weaving
It shimmered and shined and smiled right back at you
And when it swallows you whole, you feel its heartbeat around you
But what the poets say is true, not all that glitters is gold

Two men stood caught in the glen

One named Weaselous

And the other Marvelico



Weird + Words + We

Soft background piano playing an arpeggio

One man rich, one man poor

Both men fish, one man bores

Says Marvelico to Weaselous,
For what have you called me?

Replies Weaselous,
The law.

The swish of cape precedes the frown
And Marvelico steps forward
As though to hunt him down
To whom does this law pertain? asks Marvelico

Why, to everyone, answers Weaselous



Weird + Words + We

Says Marvelico, let me take a gander
It's a vain gift to your wife you want to hand her
Just because she could not withstand you

I could not understand her, says Weaselous

You cannot understand, repeats Marvelico
You will never understand.

The law has been broken, begins Weaselous

But Marvelico verbally trods him in rage
This law is fake, says Marvelico,
It's for lawmakers to take as much as they can take
It's no righteous amendment
It was born out of misunderstanding.

I wish to leave my wife, says Weaselous

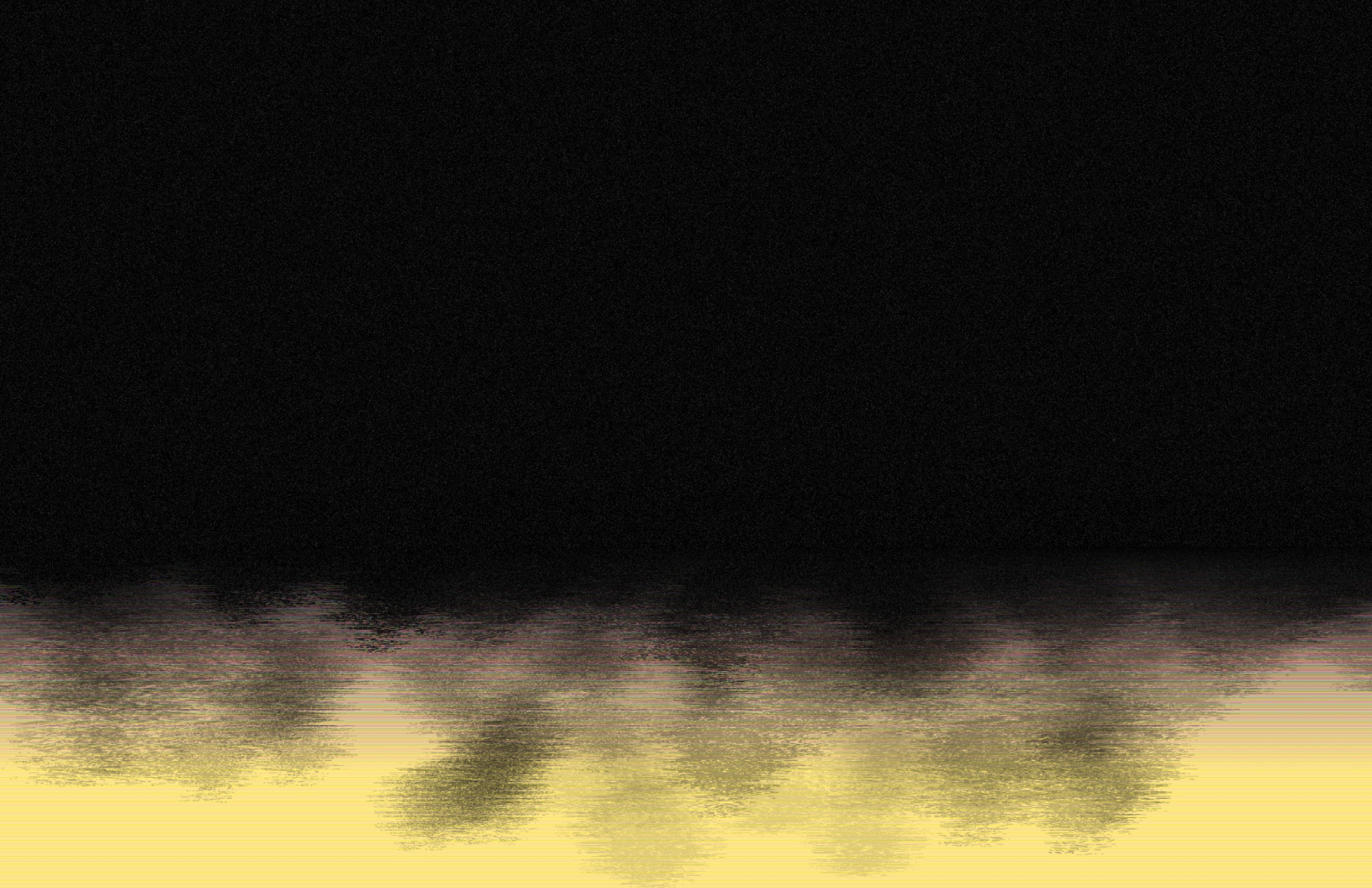
Weird + Words + We

She is no good for me anymore. She is not fulfilling her duties.

No, says Weaselous.

Do you understand why that is? asks Marvelico.

Exactly, says Marvelico.



Xeno

Finally, I have done it. I have written something sappy about someone I care about!!!!

Headstrong, heartstrong, smiling eyes

We might not be friends anymore but my mind survives

So let's take a moment to analyze how someone can hope from across the divide

Dear Xeno,

Let your hope stand for **HUNGER**, a hunger for change in you

You deserve a better life and it starts in your mind.

Let your hope stand for **ORNATE**, your future is ornate

Your future is bright, it's shimmery and beautiful, I can tell

Let your hope stand for **PRIZES**, everything is for a reason!

Your pain will translate into love once you experience the next season

I let my hope stand for **EXCESS**, because my hope is honestly too much

I don't know what to do with some of it, so here you go; you have all you need now.



Yamuna

I feel like Shivaji taking over Torna Fort

Oh, and me, too! Like my namesake and my birthsake

I'm going to let my hope stand for **HUNGER**

Because I will not stop until my dreams are accomplished. I am starving; when I am full, I will die.

I'm going to let my hope stand for **ORNATE**

And I will be ornate, I will be confident, I will be powerful. I am not your Indian nerd.

I'm going to let my hope stand for **PRIZES**

And I've already gotten the very first; you're reading it.

My hope oscillates, yet it stands for **EXCESS**

And like I just said... I don't know what to do with it. You know what, here – you need it too.

And now it's time to wrap things up by wrapping them around...



Zenith

I do not have sadness. I swear, I literally don't think I have sadness. I AM SO THANKFUL

I direct a small group charging in a direction
It breaks everyone else's tide
I have my confidence and my pride
I will soon have my life and my honest mind

Then they come in, attempted homicide in my domicile
Their guns usually don't blast bullets, they spray ink
But they jam up in the chamber, and I smile, so they leave, bit by bit

I have regained my confidence
I have regained my pride
I have regained my bejeweled saffron suit and neatly ironed tie



Zenith

If I feed into it now, I will die
So I ignore the crowd, they worship a lie
The ink they sprayed before is wiped by my mind
And now I know why.

I no longer yell, I laugh, it's a true happy ever after
Measure my face's smile with a protractor
It reflects my birth of hope after
My mockery was made void by me and my contractors.

What I'm saying is that my mind is a powerful tool
But recently it was hijacked by many a fool
Who reprogrammed it to follow their own rules

But I took it back.

Zenith

Seeing handholds in the knots of the tree trunks
Hearing calmness in the whirs of the ceiling fans
And seeing beauty when I look into mirrors.

I was living my life on a monotonous autopilot
But now I've shifted gears
Nth time was the charm

I am no longer alone now,
Now there is a new way for things to run:
In the safety of my poems right here at home
In my twinkling golden chariot shining brightly with the sun.
My olive branch isn't a crown yet, but when it's around my head, it will never come undone

I came out of my shell and saw the world in bright light,
And I kept that light so the world will be always right,

Zenith

And sore eyes will always, *always*, under any circumstances,
rain or shine,
storm or breeze,
school or store,
old or young,
mine or theirs,

see me as a nice sight.









SELLING
FRESH FISH
TIN. PISCA
CORA

STAR ★

Muneca
ALINA

That just happened

This doesn't feel real. This feels like it came out of Dreamworld.

I'm done.

I really just finished the book.

I wrote that last poem.

I am in shock.

You know, when you're seriously committed to a big project like this, you're always thinking of what to *do next*. But when you *finish* it, you take a step back and your brain goes "woah, wait, what? I *did* that?" And yeah, apparently, I just did this! It took me five months, February to June. My brain is feeling weird not having something to do next.

I'm happy with it. I think I did well. I'm curious to see what others think – but I know I did well in my eyes.

That just happened

Now that I have written that last poem and divided all my hope amongst everyone who has and will ever read this book in its entirety – I have nowhere but up to go.

My name is meant for the lights, and I am changing the world whether you like it or not! Like I say to anyone who will listen, your kids will grow up watching my movies.

In any case, huge ambition or not – this is a massive weight off my shoulders, and thank you for reading.

Wait! That's not it. You might have noticed something... else... in this book that I haven't addressed yet –

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a person's eyes. The eyes are dark and wide open, looking directly at the viewer. The skin around the eyes is light, and the eyebrows are dark and well-defined. The overall tone is dramatic and intense.

**CAN YOU SOLVE
MY SECRETS?**

Mohit Goze

...Another Angle

Have fun with this

I am a notorious perfectionist. I'm also weirdly picky with what I don't like, but fine with anything when it comes to what I do like. I hate putting in extra work, but when it comes to something I like, I always give it my 110%. In this case, the 10% is hiding ciphers, codes, and puzzles inside my poetry book in case all the talk about mental health and racism is getting to you. There's also a lot of hidden messaging and double entendres to figure out.

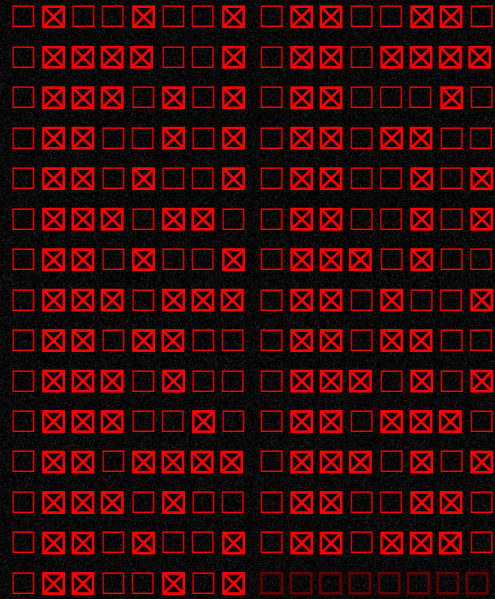
For example: I draw comparisons between me and Shivaji, who conquered a fort at 16 in Indian history. I am 16 years old as of writing. Shivaji and I also share a birthday. That last poem was my fort being conquered.

I wrote all these ciphers myself – it took me a while. But it's worth it, because now you have a few things to do when you're bored. I think that's pretty cool.

(No, unfiction fans... this is not an ARG. I know, I know. I just thought it would be weird to write a meta-story for a poetry book.)

Just a hint... I'd start by taking a look at the weird boxes in the corners.

Wait hold on I have to finish the cipher... hold on... done.



yv kjncwy gjua ngybn

Oh yeah and that. Anyways, thanks for reading!

Mohit Goze

Toolbox

Typesetting and formatting in

Digital art in

Photos taken with

Google Slides (so professional right)

GNU Image Manipulation Program/GIMP

Canon EOS Rebel T3i

For my typography nerds

This book was designed by Mohit Gore. The text was set in Georgia, a typeface designed by Matthew Carter in 1993. The display type was set in Playfair Display, designed by Claus Eggers Sørensen in 2011, **Lexend**, designed by Bonnie Shaver-Troup in 2017, and **HORIZON**. Additional typefaces include Courier New, Lora, and **my own handwriting**.

cute Technoblade pig for my sister

Fern
Minecraft



-3007, 109, 1623
Seasonal Orchard



100/100



125

The player's status bars and hotbar. From top to bottom: a row of 10 white hearts representing full health; a row of 10 red hearts representing full hunger; a green bar representing 21 experience points; and a hotbar containing 10 slots with various tools and items, including a pickaxe, a sword, a shovel, a hoe, a pickaxe, a sword, a pickaxe, a sword, a pickaxe, and a sword.

< Pig oinks

MO
HI

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

TUVWXYZ.....

.....

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.....

123456789 10+ - < > = ÷ × ≈

