



3rd Place - Category: Age 10-11

“The Unlikeliest Threat” - Ranveer, age 11

Part 1: The spell-breakers

We rise. You fall. Embrace the change and rise with us. Or be surpassed.

Cast down to a lower level.

It was the middle of the night, and stars shone piercingly through the black mass of clouds, a vat of smoky death. The world was poisoned, and we had the antidote.

Five years ago, the popular social media companies Talos and Exosphere Communications joined forces and created the most well-engineered social media platform, Space Monkey. It dragged innumerable people into its terrible clutches like a whirlpool. Slowly but surely, exam results dipped, people became isolated, and progress stagnated. It created an unstoppable power, which could not be halted without some serious thought and ingenuity – qualities which were fast diminishing. But we had those.

“The master codes are almost finished,” I declared. “On your command, they will be ejected into the targeted entities. Jack will disable the firewall using the hack keys, and the codes will shut down the targets. That way, the initial app data will not be destroyed. I keep reminding myself that we don’t want to cause upset, just to help the world. It’s for their own good, although they may not realise it.”

“Good...”. Miss Citrine’s voice rang out across the deserted parlour. She was a 19-year-old computer genius, and the Student President at our university.

Ten minutes later...



It was now time. We could change the world. As soon as the clock struck 3:00 AM, the codes would be released. “Five,” Miss Citrine announced, “Four, three, two, one, and... release!”

Part 2: The poisoned citizen

Nature shall eventually prevail

This was the life. Lying in bed until 12:00 PM on Space Monkey. It's great, really. But my mum was so annoying. All she ever did was pester me to go outside, or revise, or play with my little sister. I didn't need to revise. Who even needed to do exams for a future career on social media? And my sister? All she ever did was clog up the broadband with those 'important essays' that she thought were so smart. That was what I used to think.

And then it happened. WHERE WAS SPACE MONKEY? It had gone. The app froze every time I tried to open it. I bent furiously over to the router, but it seemed fine. I looked out to the street. People were rushing out of their houses. It felt like it was doomsday. I dashed out of bed and darted over to my friend's house, but inside, all I saw was him staring at his phone in absolute despair.

Over time, the spell was finally broken. Much of humanity was released from the poisoned fingers of Space Monkey, owing to the foresight and courage of Miss Citrine. Nature with all its beauty is no longer invisible to us. Neighbours are no longer nameless faces to us. Our brains are no longer transfixed by a blue screen. The world is finally cured.