

# The Sims 2020: *Karmic Justice Edition*

**NAFISA AFSARA CHOWDHURY**

In light of our recent plague, I had some profound realisations. You can run, you can hide, but you can't escape the questionable actions of your past.

## Ghosts of Our Past

It's a fine summer evening, a nostalgic instrumental music fills the air in my bedroom, where I, a seemingly innocent 15-year-old in my sweaty school uniform, sit glued to my computer screen for several hours playing *The Sims*. I take a lifetime to create a couple of fictional characters, spend another to construct their fancy mansions. Then, I add a fancy swimming pool from which I later remove the ladder, for no apparent reason, and watch until the very same characters inevitably perish.

## Did that stir your memories?

On other days, when I feel a bit more adventurous, I trap my Sim in a tiny room and remove the doors. Oh, and let's not forget the occasional fires. There is no use looking at me in disgust like I'm some monster, I know you're probably recalling the cathartic experience of

annihilating a pixelated character's life right now.

## Is This Real Life? Or Is This Just Simulation?

It's Day 107 today. It all started with losing my front door on March 20th. Surreal, right? Nothing has been the same since. I was mildly suspicious initially, but I have now managed to connect the dots. Oh God, this is such a disaster. Despite carefully locking them up in the furthest corner of my brain, vivid flashbacks of my Sims begging for an escape have finally come back to haunt me. Honestly, I could never see this coming. But, here we are, facing the ridiculous consequences of karmic justice.

The sequence of chilling events didn't end there. Before I knew it, a giant plumbob started to hover over my head, which

quickly switched from a vibrant green to a haunting red. Stupidly, I disregarded this. Of course, I tried pressing Ctrl+Shift+C repeatedly, but alas, no cheat codes worked to fix my stir-crazy episodes. Have some mercy.

Just when I thought I witnessed all abnormalities, I somehow started uttering bits of Simlish gibberish (I'm suddenly fluent) in between speaking human.

Tell me, how long do I keep denying these eerie parallels? Living with all this shame and guilt... I can't help but wonder if this would be happening if we had simply controlled our sadistic impulses when we had the chance?

At this point, I'm fairly certain that like my Sim, I'm just swim-

ming in circles, paddling and thrashing, searching fruitlessly for a ladder that no longer exists.

## What Goes Around... Comes Back Around

Every time something happened, I felt that this Higher Being had been looking over me with a triumphant smile, along with all my dead Sims cheering on raucously from the Afterlife, their plumbobs shining a bright green, as they rejoiced in their prophesied victory over me.

It is true what they say, you reap what you sow. It may have taken a life-threatening plague for my eyes to finally open up and have this crushing realisation of the irrevocable damage I have caused, but I promise I'm a changed person now, growing and learning from my horrid past.

That being said, can I have my door back, please?

*Nafisa has clearly played too much Sims in her lifetime and finally lost it. Send her thoughts and prayers at sara.chow26@gmail.com*



# A CURIOUS CASE OF MINI-MANIA

**SARAH WASIFA**

From airplanes to designer bags, bubble teas to Ghiblian trips, miniatures are nothing short of metaphorical teabags infusing magic into everyday life. While these Lilliputian creations are often dismissed as simple toys, they are feats of patience and sheer craftsmanship. If you've ever stopped scrolling to look at a tiny cake, or even diminutive succulents, you're not alone in your admiration. But the question still stands, and it's a curious one at that: what is there to love in a miniature?

## IT'S CUTE.

Dollhouses and ships in bottles, as early as the 18th century, were objects of wealth and dexterity. Maybe it was the allure of things to attach ideas to—narratives, voices to the objects, cake in the oven, the impossible details, or the fantasy of time travel that delighted the masses, or because they're simply everyday objects, just shrunk down. Beauty products, thermos flasks with working lids, scenes taken from everyday life, or even movies, storefronts, medicine shops with drawers filled with dried herbs, miniaturists today are in no way limited to the confines of a 1:12 living room. And it's all undeniably, and for absence of a better word, cute. How else would you describe a cupcake that's a centimetre tall, or an ice cream with dainty toppings? Tiny army men? Cute. The abandoned theatre on display on a teacup? Cute. Neo-miniaturism is as diverse as its enthusiasts and trends, and it's all in the details.

## IT'S SCIENCE.

Miniatures scratch a very particular niche in everyone's brain. Whether you gravitate towards food, or vignettes, the scale of these incite an immediate power trip in most - a universe at your control, your story to write, no bills, no realistic property prices to consider. Flaws, scaled down, become next to invisible. While most of our lives are spent seeing disjointed parts and stitching them together in our heads, miniatures provide the satisfaction of seeing how it all comes together, allowing us to better process the big picture. Add that to the illusion of frozen



time, and voila, you have a fantasy retreat at your fingertips. A gentle wish of fulfilment, be it a new world, a moment of peace, or a bit of control. For a maker, it's the challenge of creating something realistic in such a small form, and effort put into every detail that forms a mental exercise that keeps them, well, sane.

Whether or not you've been swept up by the recent wave of miniaturism, popularised by the multitude of blogs detailing the how-tos and more, you can't deny the appeal in their little forms. From toddlers to collectors in their eighties, this transfixing hobby has made home

in the part of everyone's hearts that yearns for a bit of enchantment. Everyone has a favourite miniature, be it for an emotional value for just the plain aesthetic. As for the artists, the tabletop is a stage, and their skills, the performer.

Care for a piece of pretend-cake, anyone? Delicious.

*Sarah Wasifa sees life as a math equation: problematic, perhaps with a solution, and maybe sometimes with a sign to tear off a page and start over again. Help her find 'y' at sarah-wf77@gmail.com*