

The New Lightsaber is Cool

I was going to talk about our cover story and delve a little into some of the more noteworthy articles but really this week's content doesn't need introduction.

The articles are self-explanatory. Let's talk about something *really* important.

Star Wars. Episode VII. Fans worldwide are gushing about the teaser, and our writer is no exception. I will however point out that he is completely wrong about the new lightsaber being silly; look up longsword design. What at first glance appear to be a pair of dinky little mini-lightsabers poking out the sides of the handle is actually what weaponsmiths call a crossguard. They are designed to stop the enemy chopping the swordsman's hand off from above. Naturally this particular crossguard would need to be a pair of blade emitters itself, because only a lightsaber can block a lightsaber.

— Zoheb Mashiur, Sub-editor, SHOUT

This Week's Horoscope

ARIES

Rehearse your questions prior to class to avoid embarrassment. Not everyone can ad-lib life.



TAURUS

If your love interest doesn't have a tattoo of a foot on his foot then s/he's not worth pursuing.



GEMINI

The good cop-bad cop routine will fail when you realize you're just adequate cops who want to live long enough to retire.



CANCER

Crush sea salt, rub them against your cheeks, profit.



LEO

Your startup will fail.



VIRGO

Your lucky day next week is this Thursday.



LIBRA

Time-travel will lead you on a romantic misadventure with Virgo.



SCORPIO

Your wife won't appreciate your edgy new tattoo.



SAGITTARIUS

Sell your pet friend off to the circus to raise money for circus tickets.



CAPRICORN

Any money spent should be considered lent. Eyeball the shopkeeper 'til he pays you back.



AQUARIUS

If you can't hold your breath for more than a minute, your life partner won't be more than a 6.



PISCES

How can you hope to find true happiness if you don't eat yer meat?



MIXTAPE

Ustad Sultan Khan

Dheemo Re/ Maand

Amaan Ali Khan &

Ayaan Ali Khan

Mystic dunes

Rahul Sharma &

Richard Clayderman

Jaisalmer

Padma Shri Aruna

Sairam & Ram Sampath

Paiyada

Ustad Shahid

Parvez Khan

Bhatiali

Ustad Ghulam Mustafa

Khan & A.R Rahman

Aao Balma/ Bandish

Kishori Amonkar & Pandit

Hariprasad Chaurasia

Bhupali

Shakti (John McLaughlin,

L. Shankar, Zakir Hussain

& T. H. Vinayakram)

Bridge Of Sighs

HASAN SHAHRIAR

Haruki Murakami for me is a pretty complex writer. You can't put all his works in one box. On one hand you have the lyricism of "Norwegian Wood" and "The Wind-up Bird Chronicle" and on the other the gritty, rough, and bizarre Trilogy of the Rat and "Hard boiled wonderland and the end of the world". "After Dark" falls somewhere in between these two poles. It is a short novel, only 200 or so pages, yet brave in its language, eccentric in dialogue, and plain absurdist in terms of plot.

We have the two sisters, Mari and Eri. Mari is spending her night out in a café, reading a big book. She encounters a boy named Takahashi, who plays the trombone in a band. Takahashi went to high school with Mari's sister and knows her slightly. They begin talking. Meanwhile, Eri has been asleep for two months, and when the clock blinks 0:00, her plugged out TV flickers open, and she starts waking up -- only to find herself inside the TV.

The novel is probably Murakami's least hyped one, and has an aura of emptiness surrounding it. Murakami's alienations are embedded into the novel, even though not

one of the characters put on his shoes. Which is odd, because that is the one thing which is so ubiquitous about his books. You find a character making spaghetti and listening to The Beach Boys whilst his copy of "The Magic Mountain" is sprawled open on the kitchen table, and you know it is Murakami himself.

It is often joked that you can describe Murakami's books in one sentence: cats, jazz, alienation, Beatles, something vanishing, weird phone calls, running, students, Tokyo at night, mysterious women, cooking.

But this isn't entirely true. Murakami's surrealism is comedy. In "After Dark", Eri is perplexed when she finds herself in a world that resembles her room inside her 'TV'. We see her trying to push the doors and windows open. We see her touching everything, trying to understand the construction, the physics of her world; then going back to sleep. Nights are portrayed as full of longings, full of intrusions.

For me, the trilogy of the Rat is still Murakami at his best, but people interested to see that other sensuous, romantic side of Murakami would do well to read this.

