

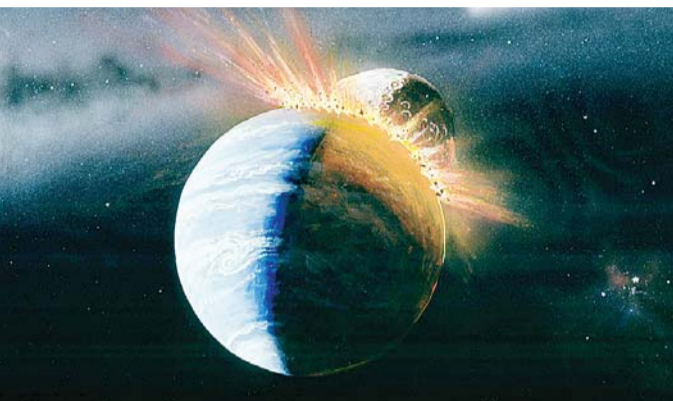
Break The Monotony Day

Get up. Shower. Get Dressed. Have Coffee. Do your commute. Go to your job. Spend the day doing the same job you did yesterday. Punch out. Commute back home. Have dinner. Watch TV. Sleep well. Do it all again tomorrow. There's a certain security in a steady schedule, but too much of the same thing gets you stuck in a rut and the monotony can just kill you. Break the Monotony Day reminds us that sometimes change is good and can really make a difference.

#SPACE

Origin Of The Moon

The discovery represents a significant piece of the puzzle towards understanding how the moon, potentially the Earth and other celestial bodies were formed.



Researchers have discovered the first definitive proof that the moon inherited indigenous noble gases from the Earth's mantle. The discovery represents a significant piece of the puzzle towards understanding how the moon, potentially the Earth and other celestial bodies were formed.

Humankind has maintained an enduring fascination with the moon. It was not until Galileo's time however that scientists really began study it. Over the course of nearly five centuries researchers put forward numerous much debated theories as to how the moon was formed.

Now geochemists, cosmologists and petrologists at ETH Zurich shed new light on the moon's origin story.

The research team reports finding that shows the moon inherited the indigenous noble gases of helium and neon from Earth's mantle.

The discovery adds to the already strong constraints on



the currently favoured 'Giant Impact' theory that hypothesizes the moon was formed by a massive collision between Earth and another celestial body.

During her doctoral research at ETH Zurich, Patrizia Will analysed six samples of lunar meteorites from an Antarctic collection, obtained from NASA. The meteorites consist of basalt rock that formed when magma welled up from the interior of the moon and cooled quickly. They remained covered by additional basalt layers after their formation which protected the rock from cosmic rays and particularly the solar wind. The cooling process resulted in the formation of lunar gas particles among the other minerals found in magma.

Will and the team discovered that the glass particles retain the chemical fingerprints (isotopic signatures) of the solar gases: helium and neon from the moon's interior. Their findings strongly support that the moon inherited noble gases indigenous to the Earth.

"Finding solar gases for the first time in basaltic materials from the moon that are unre-



The call of the mountains comes at a price



People often dream about running away and setting a home far from the madding crowd. But is it that simple? Is it easy leaving the convenience-rich city life and setting a home in the wilderness? Is life in the mountains more than just a fairy tale?



Suman Shastri
Suman Shastri is a travel writer based in Kangra, Himachal Pradesh

You have such a dream life," I hear this all the time. I want to tell them I agree, but what exactly is the 'dream life'? I put off replying. Excuse me, I have a pile of dishes to get back to before the power goes out again.

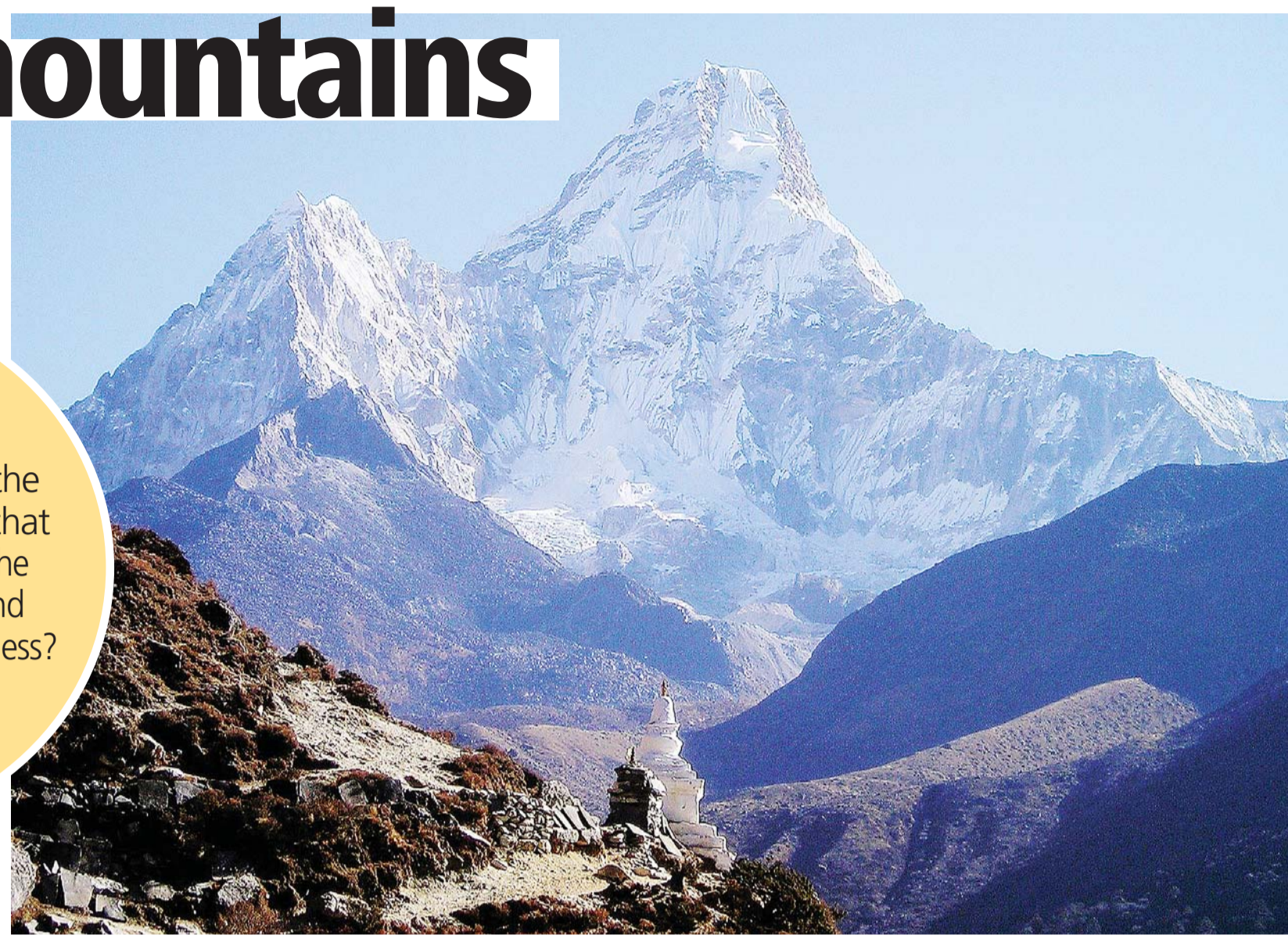
Making a home in the mountains

I live in a quaint village in Kangra, in the foothills of the Himalayas. Until last year, we did not have a road up to the village. Tourists are common in summer and visit for peace and quiet. I share the same sentiment and have given up on a huge deal to live here. I am cognisant of the privilege I have over people in the village, who have grown up amidst hardships and over those in the cities who do not have the option of leaving everything behind. But to this day, after six years of moving, I have had second thoughts on my choice of making the mountains my home. Living in a city with the cushion of certainty seems easy. I do believe the grass is greener here, and every time I open the tap to fresh spring water I am reminded of why I am still here.

The changing mountain air

Last summer, someone mentioned how wonderful the winter chill is. I stood there thinking, what a misfortune it is that June reeks of crisp cold November mornings. This person won't spend more than a few days here, I have the whole year and then the next. The climate is changing. I think about the summer before and all the crops that failed, about winter this year and my heart sinks. We barely had snow and are now paying for it with severe water shortage from the glaciers running dry. Crops are going to fail this year too; my landlady laments to me one day it's been a tough year, a couple actually, if I count the last ones too.

Does this mean I am discouraging one from having this 'dream life'? I don't think I am in a position to. But having spent half a decade here, I am encouraging one to be more mindful. Mountains aren't



#LIFE

simply out there to take selfies with

To Summit a Mountain

Allow me to put people in boxes to make my point and I can tell you my observations: there are two kinds of people who strive to live this life. I use the measure of how they would summit a tough mountain to illustrate these boxes.

There's one kind that reach the summit and feel proud. This has been their one opportunity to prove themselves, and as they stand tall upon the peak they feel like they have conquered this mighty mountain. Then there's the kind that climb up to the summit and submit themselves in gratitude. They are thankful that the mountain has allowed them to climb upon it safe and sound. Being on top of the mountain makes them feel humble.

Big mountain small people

People do not have to climb a mountain to exhibit either of these behaviours. Living up in the mountains is a gargantuan task, far from the glorified ideas planted upon people by social media. The mountains constantly reminds us of how small we are. We think we are capable, and a loose rock brings the ground beneath our feet crumbling down. We think we can conquer a mighty mountain, and the moun-

Mindful living

There are times I miss the convenience of the city but living here makes me realise what an unaware consumer I have been all my life. It's different there, you buy more than you need, put most of it in a garbage bin and someone comes



Learnings from the mountain

I know how alluring this life seems but this greener grass is not the answer to all our problems. By all means move to the mountains if you want to fully acknowledge the cost it comes at and the struggles it brings along. Be cognisant, you are walking into someone else's home to call it your own whether it be the villagers who settled here ages ago or the wildlife this space actually belongs to. Be mindful it takes time for them to accept you. Be thoughtful about your body, it needs time to adjust to a different climate. The snow looks beautiful on Instagram but will literally knock the breath out of you. Be conscious of how vulnerable you feel when you're close to nature; how easy it is to with to hide behind convenient distractions. Be aware of how ethically you are consuming and disposing of what you use. It stares you back in your face out here. Be grateful of the clean air and water you have access to and preserve it. Be humble.

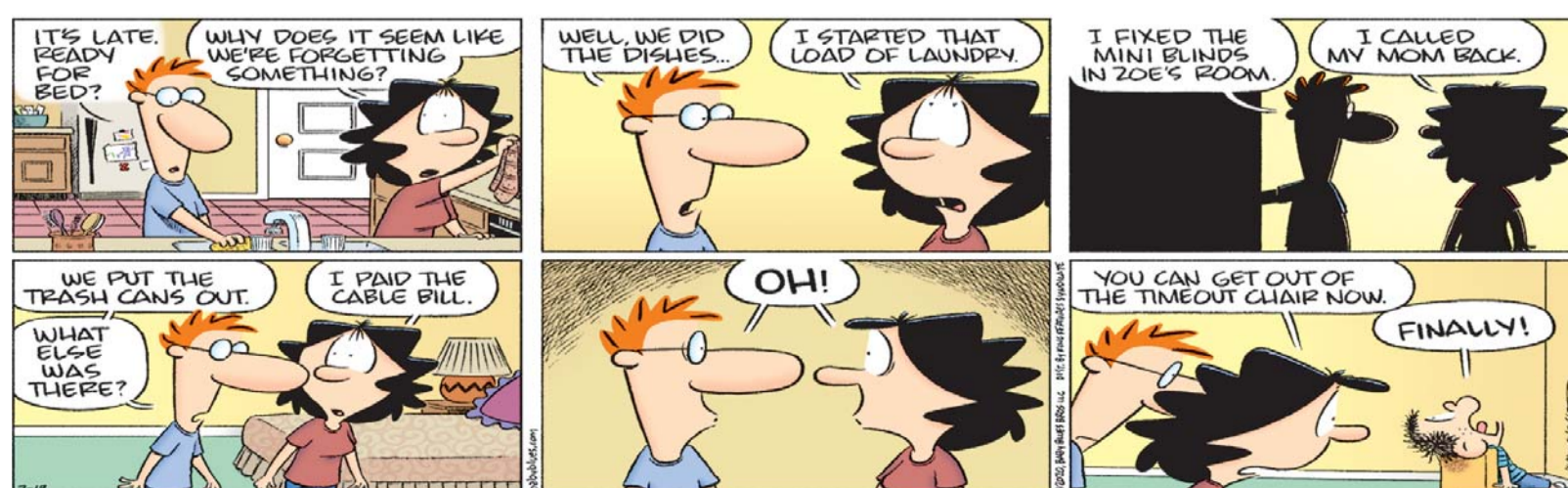
I used to talk about how impossible it is for me to head back to the pandemonium of city life; how I know I won't survive there and how I am willing to do anything to make this work. Today, I live with full acceptance & gratitude: I am here because the mountains have let me.

Climate change hits you harder when you live closer to nature. I prefer second hand clothes now that I have realised how indispensable resources really are. No textbook has taught me this virtue like the mountains have. Regardless of the cost it is not an option to live with the same conveniences here. The mountains are bare and the impact we have on them stares us starkly on our face, consequences looming

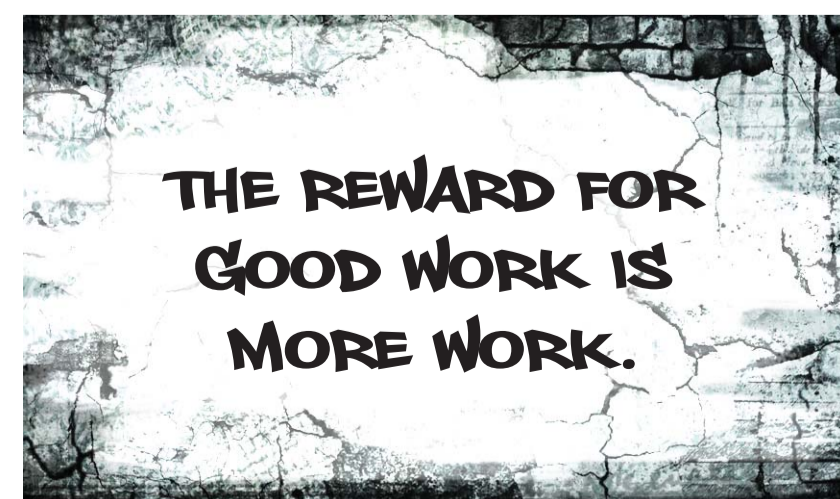


By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

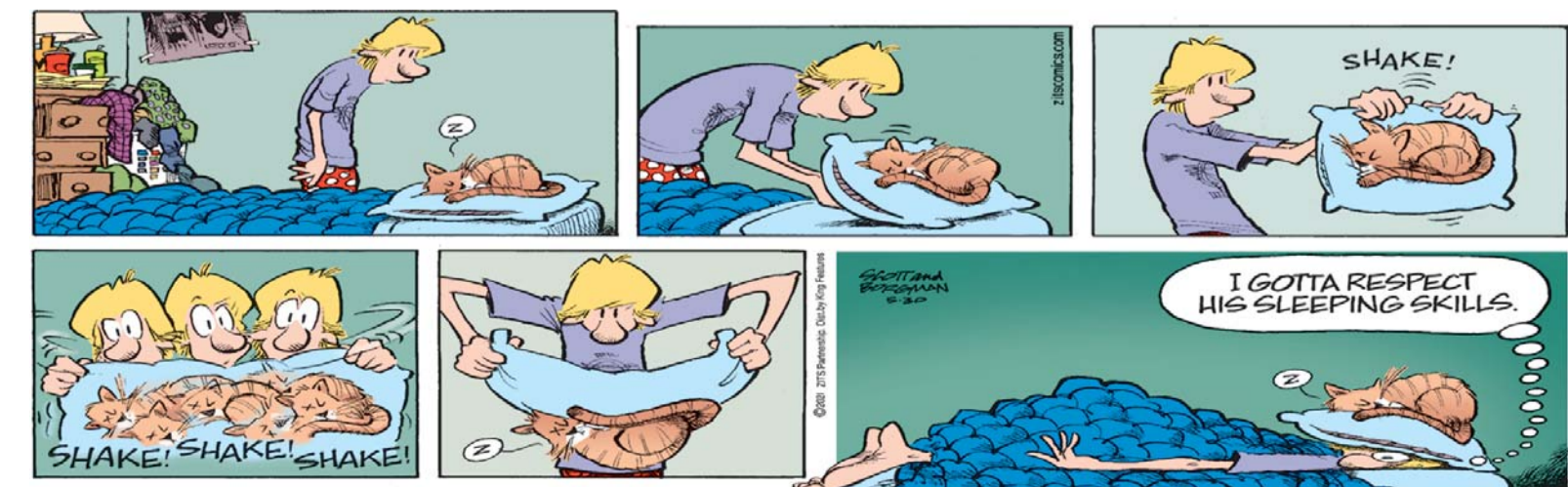
BABY BLUES



THE WALL



ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

#CULTURE

Immunity-Boosting Food

No matter where you go in the country, you will invariably find seasonal foods and dietary practices codified into rituals and festivals.



Alvati.

On the eleventh day of shukla (bright fortnight) of the Hindu month of Ashadh, many adherents observe Ashadhi Ekadashi. It is believed that on this day Vishnu slips into his divine slumber that lasts four months - a period known as Chaturmasa or Chau mas.

In Maharashtra, many homes especially in rural areas offer a fruit called vaghate or Govind phal to Vitthal, a manifestation of Vishnu. The fruit, gravid with seeds is typically crushed and cooked with fresh coconut, coriander, peanuts and a host of spices to make vaghateyachi bhaji. Alternatively, it is chopped and cooked into a spiced curry with moth dal or simply fried to a crisp snack. It is generally held that the green



Patoli

vaghate which is abundant during early rains possesses medicinal virtues that keep typical monsoonal diseases at bay. The custom of offering vaghate to Vitthal and then serving it to the household is rooted in India's tradition of seasonal eating and harnessing the nutraceutical benefits of food. Across the country all the year round seasonal food and dietary practices have been codified into rituals. The monsoon is no different.

According to the legend, on discovering baby Krishna is his cradle, his foster father Nanda feasted in taaler bora and danced with joy 'Ki ananda holo

Across the border from Goa, in Maharashtra, foraging lies at the heart of Rushi Panchami, which is celebrated a day after Ganesh Chaturthi. On this occasion many Maharashtrian homes make Rushi chi Bhaji or Hermit's stew with a mix of uncultivated vegetables and foraged leafy greens. As the name suggests the dish commemorates the foraging lifestyles of sages who lived in the wild but at the same time it is a one-pot celebration of monsoon's verdant wealth.

Many herbs and leafy vegetables consumed by Malayali Hindus during Karkidakam are neither cultivated nor domesticated. A classic Karkidakam dish is the Pathila Thoran, a stir fry of 10 leafy greens often finished with freshly grated coconut. Every family has a different mix of wild greens depending on what grows in their backyard.

It's in the monsoon that Hindus celebrate the birth of Krishna, one of the avatars of Vishnu. In Mangalorean Hindu homes, a typical Janmashtami dish is alvati, a ginger-scented curry made with iron-rich colcasia leaves that grow unattended in the season. On this occasion, you may also find these homes making gajabe ambat, a coconut and tamarind based curry with monsoon vegetables such as yam, bread fruit, Mangalorean cucumbers called magge and okra.

Moving east, Janmashtami is announced in Bengali homes by the heady, sugary aroma of taal



Taal Phuluri.

Braje, ki ananda holo. Gopale payiya. Braje ki ananda holo. Taaler Bora - kheyo Nanda nachite lagilo, goes a Bengali folk song. What joy in Braj! Oh what joy! Nanda eats palm fritters and dances with joy!

On the west coast, in many Goan homes, it is customary on Ganesh Chaturthi to build a matoli, a type of herbarium that showcases monsoon's bounty. Suspended canopy like over the idol of Ganesh the matoli is made up of a wooden grid with seasonal fruits and vegetables such as the ridge gourd, hog plum, colcasia leaves, local red amaranth, turmeric leaves and areca nuts. Under the matoli, many believers offer the deity a dish comprising of 21 local vegetables found in the rainy season.

A day before Ganesh Chaturthi, Goan Saraswat families propitiate Gouri with an offering of sweet patoli or patoleo - medicinal turmeric leaves (which grow wild in the region during the monsoon) dipped in rice batter and steamed. The story goes that a pregnant Gauri craves the steamed rice cakes on this day. Also offered to Gauri on this day is a dish made of five leafy vegetables: tamba bhaji (red amaranth), maskachi bhaji (moringa leaves), dharvi bhaji (local green amaranth), alsandayachi bhaji (cowpea leaves) and dhudyachi bhaji (tender pumpkin leaves).

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Pathila Thoran.