

Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot

March 9, 2024 | Issue No. 2700



TREK TALK

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The Uncomfortable Truth

Krishiv Jaiswal *analyses the commitments made to deep-rooted friendships in School.*

.....
*Consider. Pen down. Delete. Re-add.
Delete. Repeat.*

Writing can be a gruelling process because there is a lot of pondering involved for it to be not only a genuine expression of the writer but also appeal to the readers, our friends. The latter part of the statement is significant. You see, I've always found it hard to establish a sense of balance in my writing; whether it fits my beliefs, but more importantly, whether it fits my friends' beliefs. The same is true for other areas of School life and this insidious nature of 'peer pressure' may just engulf us all, with us not being able to express ourselves honestly.

We live in a School dominated by an unabating need to 'fit in' and in such a scenario, peer pressure emerges as a silent puppet master, manipulating our choices, behaviour, and moral compass. It's an invisible force that not only leads us astray but, surprisingly, can also be justified in certain contexts. Nonetheless, in most cases, there is no doubt that it blurs the line between the correct action and the expected action. The banality of this concept has made me reluctant to write about it, because it would not be too intriguing for others, but again this sort of unintentional self-imposed constraint accentuated the need to go ahead anyway and made me realise the grave impact of the issue.

Peer pressure is an omnipresent reality at Doon and this influence of friends can have a ripple effect on our daily actions. It may be seen in the figures defiant of authority in School, us becoming extremely image-conscious, exhibiting behavioural differences, and it becomes a part of how the world perceives us and we perceive ourselves. When parents compare their children to others, the issue takes another dimension. We conform to the norms set by the people around us, even when those norms conflict with our own identity. This urge to 'fit in' can lead to one surrendering one's own ethics and sense of self, and can be seen in the form of daily interactions with different individuals. It is similar to a poisonous undercurrent that tempts us to stray from morality, because the commitment to our integrity is trumped by our fear of social rejection.

Now, I am not here to stand on my soapbox and completely (and easily) villainize peer pressure because, if we're being honest, giving in to it can sometimes become a survival tactic, a way to scrape through socially challenging situations and establish a social standing. So yes, there are situations in which it can be rationalised, reflecting its intricate nature. Moreover, peer pressure can also promote desirable behaviours as seen in the case of *Doscos* cheering and encouraging their form-mates to achieve their

full potential, and also, to complete their meals!

It can be tricky to differentiate times when peer pressure is detrimental and the times when it can spur constructive change. Striking this fine balance entails introspection and a keen awareness of one's values. It's critical to consider the rationale behind succumbing to peer pressure and figure out whether it is an unhealthy need for validation or a sincere search for connection. Some people defend peer pressure by saying that it pushes people outside of their comfort zones and challenges preconceived assumptions, serving as a crucible for personal growth. However, in my opinion, the unease that results from defying this pressure is what leads to opening the door to a more expansive outlook on life.

Really, peer pressure is like a double-edged sword, and it is not uncommon for one to feel its sharp edge against one's throat, threatening and coercing one to an unrecognisable self and corrupting one's own perspective. Acknowledging its existence and understanding its subtle nature is the first step toward reclaiming autonomy over our choices (for me, this was through the film *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* which made me recognise that this pressure had inadvertently consumed

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AD HONOREM

The following are the **DSMUN** appointments for the year **2024-25**:

- President:** Divyaansh Surana
- Secretary General:** Aryavardhan Agarwal
- Executive Director:** Krtin Goel
- Deputy Secretary General:** Rohan Jalan
- Director General of Operations:** Jaisal Sahgal
- Director General of Production:** Vir Marwah
- Director General of Hospitality:** Umaid Dhillon
- Chief of Production:** Arjun Prakash

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

THE NEW GUARD

Zubin Dhar has been appointed the **Library Council Secretary** for the year **2024-25**.

All the best!

PRIMUS INTER PARES

School Colours have been awarded to Neil Bulchandani, Vidit Verma, Tarun Doss, Vivaan Malik, Gursanjan Natt, Rohan Taneja, Yashovat Nandan and Shehzaad Shergill.

The General Proficiency Cup for Seniors has been awarded to Tarun Doss.

The Gentleman Sportsman of the Year has been awarded to Vidit Verma and Neil Bulchandani.

Congratulations!

“

It is during our darkest moments that we must focus to see the light.

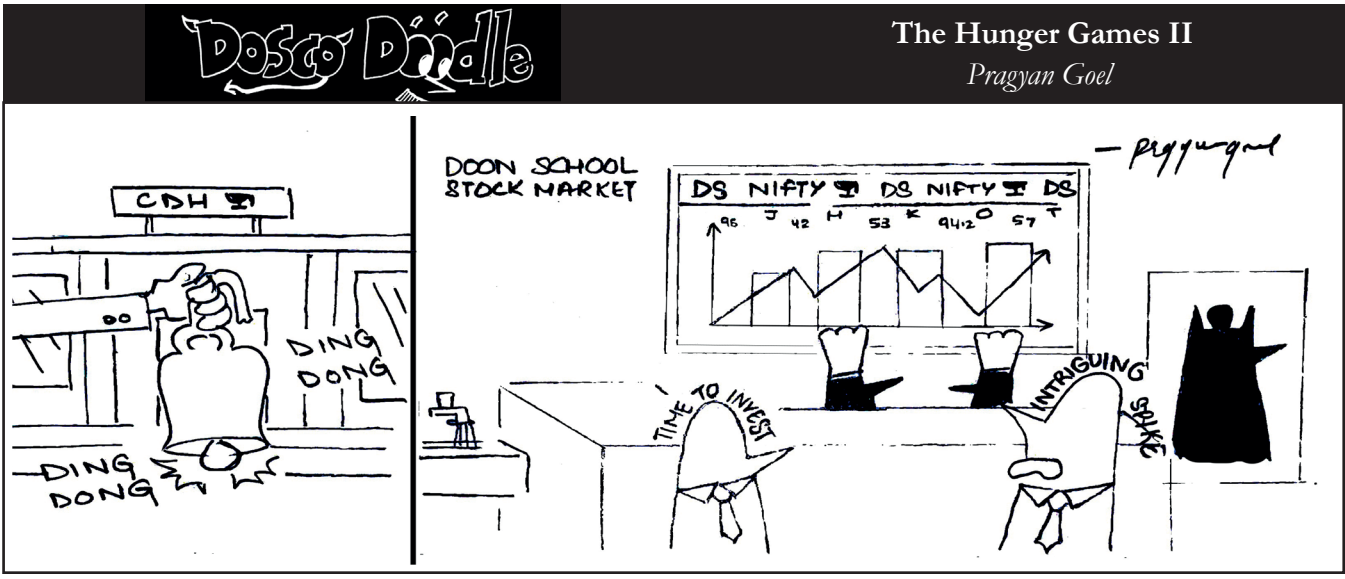
— Aristotle

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

- Cows are not natural, they are man-made.*
- DSD**, avid zoologist.
- I am a slave of the system.*
- NAS**, stuck in The Matrix.
- The opposite of duality is non-duality.*
- SKD**, FYI.
- I haven't lost it, I just can't find it.*
- Agastya Khanna**, glass half-full.
- You shouldn't not lose less weight.*
- Abhijit Sannamanda**, more or less.
- Rather than coming in my car, I would come by walk.*
- SSR**, street-smart.
- We're going to watch a video, but it's an audio.*
- MPY**, AV Squad.
- Why's that blank face on your look?*
- ABE**, the mannequin challenge.
- If I would be 5 minutes late, I wouldn't be.*
- RSL**, Schrodinger's commute.
- If you quoted the things I've said, I'd be in federal prison.*
- Udai Singh**, wanted.
- I used mechanical advantage to my advantage.*
- Aadvik Agrawal**, harnessing 'the Force'.
- Open the key.*
- Aadi Jain**, master 'keysmith'.
- How is this become?*
- Prabhav Jain**, shocked.
- I am topper than you.*
- Anantvikram Sinh**, aspiring valedictorian.

Around the World in 80 Words

France became the first country to make abortion a constitutional right. US laboratory Valisure found high levels of cancer-causing chemical benzene in many common acne treatments. The Indian Navy rescued a cargo ship crew from Houthi missile strikes, near Yemen. Gang violence in Haiti caused more than 15,000 people to flee their homes. Sweden officially joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation after it completed its accession process in Washington, becoming the 32nd member. . Max Verstappen won the Bahrain Grand Prix.



(Continued from Page 1)

me). Honestly, it is just about valuing your true self and setting yourself free of these groundless constraints. In the end, I would just leave you, the reader, on the note

that you do not need to blindly succumb to this pressure but rather strive to work around people who try and exert this pressure, without compromising your fundamental values, for the responsibility lies

with you to discern when to yield to the crowd and when to stand firm in the pursuit of what is right.

Trek Talk

The Doon School Weekly interviewed veteran mountaineer, Brigadier Ashok Abbey.

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): How have you contributed to programs like ‘Leave the Himalayas Clean’, that protect the mountains?

Brigadier Ashok Abbey (BAA): To contribute to any environmental program in the Himalayas, you first must understand the Himalayan environment. It’s only when you understand the Himalayan environment and all the stakeholders in its ecosystem, can you plan to contribute to any program in the Himalayas effectively. The Himalayan environment comprises its forests, lakes and rivers, glaciers, flora, fauna, mountain people, and other aspects. To clean the Himalayas, you need to be fully aware and committed, individually as well as institutionally. You need to have a plan based on a long-term vision, immediate mission and defining objectives, and most importantly, responsible conduct by a committed team. You need to have leaders and volunteers who understand and genuinely care about the Himalayan environment and its people, who are trained to work in extreme conditions if required. Else your effort may get diluted and become counterproductive. Over the years as a responsible expedition leader and a mountaineering administrator, I have tried to incorporate the ‘Leave the Himalayas Clean’ culture in my expeditions, share and propagate the above sentiment in letter, spirit, and action with my team members and in various other capacities that I have had the privilege to serve the mountain community.

So, before you undertake any expedition or trek in the mountains, you should plan your venture in a manner that will not degrade the environment in any manner or at least any further. Most importantly the expedition must have a systematic and dedicated plan to bring back its non-biodegradable waste, which will litter and harm the mountain environment, including the human waste from Base Camp and higher camps. The waste must be brought down to the Road Head and taken down to a District Headquarter or a nominated area by the administration for recycling and further disposal. This waste removal plan is as important as the climbing plan itself. For instance, you can

have a ‘Pick, Clean and Bring Down Yourself’ campaign, where every member disposes of his garbage systematically in contrast to just disposing of it in an ad hoc manner. Plastic, polyethylene, glass, synthetic, battery, and aluminium can be very harmful to the environment. So there has to be constant monitoring and a streamlined mechanism to get the waste generated, systematically off the mountain. The golden adage that one should leave a campsite as you would like to find it, and leave nothing but your footprints, must be followed in letter and spirit.

DSW: How do you think we could implement such programs on a larger scale to prevent pollution on highly commercialised treks and expeditions?

BAA: To implement such programs on a larger scale, the expedition must be organised right from its planning stage. In the tasking of the expedition apart from stating the climbing objectives, the cleaning and the environmental objectives of the expedition must be spelt out, as well as the methodology to achieve the same. The Leader and the Team Members must be committed to achieving these objectives. For example, students of the Doon School going on the Everest Base Camp trek must be sensitised on the environmental aspects and need to be very clear with regard to the disposal of waste generated by them on the trail. You have to be in sync with the agency that is conducting the trek, and you must make it a point to ask them the all-important question “What about the disposal of the waste generated?”. It is quite possible that you may have to raise their awareness level too along with the porters accompanying you. You should also endeavour to raise awareness levels of the locals whom you will be meeting en route. You need to sensitise them and educate them on the long-term benefits of a clean trail and a natural mountain environment, which is likely to have a multiplier effect in attracting more visitors to the area, thus greatly benefiting them economically in the long run.

वही सपना वही डर

प्रकृति पंकज | हिन्दी लघुकथा प्रतियोगिता के विजेता

“अब तुम मुझसे दूर नहीं जा पाओगी! आखिरकार मैंने तुम्हें ढूँढ ही लिया।” वह मेरी ओर बढ़ने लगा और अपने हाथ मेरे कंधे पर रखा, कानों के पास आकर कहा “पंछी जाल में फंस गया है।” पसीने से लथपथ, सांस फूली हुई, मेरी आँखें खुलते ही खिड़की से आ रही सूरज की किरणों से चौंधिया उठीं। मेरे पैर रज़ाई में लिपटे हुए थे। यह कोई नई बात नहीं है बल्कि हर रोज़ का किस्सा है। न जाने क्यों परंतु पिछले सोलह साल से इस स्वप्न ने मुझे इतना सताया है कि अब उसका मुझपर इतना फर्क नहीं पड़ता | परंतु शुरुआत में मेरे हाथ कांपने लगते थे और अकेले रहना तो असंभव हो गया था। पर अब बाईस साल की उम्र में मैंने इसे सहन करना सीख लिया है और उस स्वप्न को अब मैं हरगिज़ अपने दिन खराब करने नहीं देती। आखिरकार मैं अब वह मासूम, भोली-भाली बच्ची भी तो नहीं रही। सुबह के चार ही बजे थे पर मैंने गहरी साँस ली और आने वाले दिन की तैयारी करने लगी।

मैं जहाँ काम करती थी वहाँ सब हर रोज़ की तरह अपने-अपने कामों में व्यस्त थे और अचानक मुझे अकेलेपन की हवा के झोंके ने हिला दिया। मैंने अपने सपनों के बारे में कभी किसी को नहीं बताया पर गुप्त रूप से अपने माता-पिता से यह पूछने की कोशिश ज़रूर की कि मेरे साथ बचपन में कोई अनहोनी घटना तो नहीं घटी | हर बार वे मेरी ओर अचंभित हो कर देखते पर उनका जवाब हमेशा एक ही होता “नहीं तो बेटा तुम ऐसा क्यों पूछ रही हो?” मैंने प्रयास किया इस अजीब से ख्वाब से पीछा छुड़ाने का परंतु हर बार नाकामयाब रही। मैं अपने ख्वालों में खोई हुई थी जब किसी ने जोर से मेरे कानों में चिल्लाया। हवा में मैं तीन फुट कूद गई और मेरे हाथों में जितने भी कागज़ात थे वह इधर-उधर बिखर गए। पीछे मुड़ी तो और कोई नहीं मेरी भयावह मित्त मंजोई थी। इससे पहले कि मैं उससे कुछ कहती उसने अपनी आँखें बड़ी कर भोला सा चेहरा बना दिया और मैं उसे कुछ ना कह सकी। जब हमने सारे कागज़ात इकट्ठा कर लिए तो उससे कहा - “अब बताओ, मुझे हार्ट अटैक देने की क्या आवश्यकता थी तुम्हें?” माथा ठोकते हुए उसने कहा “तुम्हें मैंनेजर साहब बुला रहे हैं।” यह कहकर वह खरगोश की भांति कूदते हुए वहाँ से निकल गई।

मैं वहीं स्तब्ध रह गई। फिर सिर हिलाते हुए साहब के कमरे की ओर निकल पड़ी। ‘उन्होंने मुझे इस समय अचानक क्यों बुलाया है भला? यह सोचते-सोचते मैं उनके पास पहुँच

गई। कुछ समय बाद मैंने धीरे से उनके कमरे के दरवाजे को बंद किया और तेजी से मंजोई को ढूँढने के लिए निकल गई। जो खबर मुझे मिली थी वह उसे बताने के लिए मैं उत्सुक थी कि तभी जाकर उससे ही टकरा गई। “अरे! तुझे ही तो खोज रही थी। चल तुझे कुछ अच्छी खबर बतानी है!” मेरे शब्दों में मेरी खुशी झलक रही थी और उसे हाथ से घसीटते हुए मैं उसे मेरे कमरे में ले गई। “मुझे इस महीने का सबसे मेहनती एम्प्लॉयी का खिताब मिला है जिसके कारण कंपनी मुझे एक रहने का स्थान प्रदान करेगी और मुझे तीन दिन में वहाँ जाना है।” उसने मुझे गले से लगाया और मानो मेरी सारी चिंता और वो भयभीत कर देने वाला स्वप्न, सब गायब हो गए। अगले तीन दिन मानो मेरे घर में ही नहीं बल्कि मेरी जिंदगी में भी तूफान आ गया। वह सपना जैसे और ग्रसित कर देने वाला हो गया जिससे मुझे रात भर नींद नहीं आ पाई। थकान तो थी परंतु मन शांत नहीं था तो सुकून कैसे मिल पाता।

आँखें लाल और थकान से चूर होकर मैंने किसी प्रकार तीन दिनों में अपना सारा सामान समेट लिया और अपने नए घर में एक नया सफर शुरू किया। बस यही प्रार्थना थी कि वह स्वप्न कैसे भी करके रुक जाए पर कोई मंज़िल दिखाई नहीं दे रही थी। उस स्वप्न ने मुझे इतना भयभीत कर दिया था कि मैं अपने बदन को उसकी सीमा से ज्यादा खींचकर रात में सोने के बजाय अपना सामान ठीक करने लगी। तभी मेरे बक्से से भगवान बुद्ध की मूर्ति निकली। उसे हाथ में लेते ही मेरा मन कई दिनों के बाद शांत हुआ और मेरी आँखें अपने आप ही बंद होने लगीं। सुबह उठी तो मैं तरोताज़ा थी और अचंभित भी कि उस रात मुझे वह सपना नहीं आया। नीचे देखा तो मेरे हाथ में वही मूर्ति थी | भगवान बुद्ध अभी भी ध्यानमग्न थे | आँखें बंद थीं और खिड़की से एक किरण दर्पण पर पड़कर उनकी प्रतिमा पर गिर रही थी। मानो वह अपने चमकते और शांत चेहरे से मुझे संतोष दे रहे थे कि सब ठीक है।

The New Addition

Arya Das comments on the need for School to adapt to a more gender-inclusive setting.

International Women's Day started as a medium of highlighting the disparity between men and women in the workplace, especially pertaining to wage rates and working hours. It is also a way to celebrate and to recognise their contributions to the workplace. This has now been extended to encompass the many other disparities that lie between genders.

Within one such disparity lies our beloved Doon. We are "one of India's finest schools", although one gender is not getting the opportunity to access our excellence. However, we hear that this is about to change. A cohort of girls may be coming into Doon.

Just because we will eventually learn how to deal with being co-ed does not mean we don't proactively try to learn sooner.

Admitting girls into School means accepting within our community, an uncharted range of feelings, experiences and perspectives, the type of which are bound to change our interactions and outlooks as well. This is of course, not a bad change, or so we hope. Yet, somewhere the question begs to be asked: are we doing enough to confidently say that it is as good as it should be? As a community are we waiting to embrace them? Or, will we leave it for later and embrace them only when we have to?

The future co-ed batch of DoscOs dream of entering the current Doon School — glorious and reliable. It is upon us to provide them the Doon that they deserve. As for infrastructural development, we are more than ready. It is the intangibles that need more consideration. Just because we will eventually learn how to deal with being co-ed does not mean we don't proactively try to learn sooner. Because while we learn, the batches that would fall in the cusp would miss out on certain essentials that make 'the Doon School experience' unique. This would indeed be a huge loss for all concerned.

Here, the question that has been repeated time and again comes to mind: 'What makes Doon, Doon?' To me, the answer is simple. Doon is just — better. It is a better place to live in, a better place to grow with, and a better place to realise within.

What is it with girls coming in that we risk losing our 'better'? A lot of what we are has been

described by many as a 'brotherhood'. A Senior knows how to guide a Junior, and knows almost exactly what the Junior thinks or feels. This shared bond is what the new girls would be the most likely to miss out on.

Platonic intimacies are an important part of our School community, and they shape the understanding of our identities and emotions. Having a role model is a genuine and important developmental need. Generally, girls tend to look up to girls, and boys tend to look up to boys. Schools often are the best place to foster such relationships. Yet, in our situation many of the girls who join might feel like they lack a grip in this regard.

To reduce the void, we must know more about the intricacies of girlhood better than the child herself, at least as much as possible. We must be able to cradle them or lead them — whichever is needed; give words to their feelings. For the lack of a better example, because I have not experienced boyhood in School firsthand, I would use the following analogy: just as a C form guide knows that the reason a new D former did not eat dinner is not because the food tastes bad but because the boy is homesick, we must realise that the child is just a child.

The girls will not have the body of the people they will be required to look up to, and so the boys must step up, the community must step up. While it is true that it is impossible to provide for this need completely, we at least should do what we can to make it easier for the girls to find their footing. We must prepare ourselves from now on for the changes we need to bring amongst ourselves to help the girls deal with this vacuum. We must inculcate empathy and appropriate sentiments in the current Juniors (who will become seniors for the first co-ed batch of DoscOs) in a way that they are a little closer to fulfilling the needs of these girls than they otherwise would have been.

Our School is on the brink of an evolution. We must empower ourselves to drive this evolution when it starts. We are the ones who invited it. We cannot let the burden of change or constancy fall upon the shoulders of these young women. It is important to take charge.

The Week Gone By

Zubin Dhar

The models, shaped by unseen, but subconsciously felt hands, take their final form. Fired in the roaring inferno, their clay sets and fortifies. No longer simply water and earth, but intricate statues to look up to, Ozymandiases to be looked down upon by, legends and infamies cemented alike. Painted in their colours, bright or sombre, dressed in their finest glaze, polished to perfection, they leave the kiln. The Sculptor, ever changing and ever fickle, runs his eye across his latest productions. He sighs, sad to see them go, sadder that he had no more time to work on them. And so he puts them, one by one, on the conveyor belt that leads to the outside, past his studio walls. He knows not where it goes, nor what happens to them, but he is proud, unimaginably proud, of what they represent, and the warmth they will bring outside his little studio, high in the

mountains, far away from anywhere at all.

What a week this has been, with several endings and a few beginnings taking place in such a short time, a veritable week-of-the-phoenix in our DS Calendar (our answer to the Chinese one).

After the Farewell Assembly, tears were shed and bones were crushed, as it finally hit some of us that our dear ScLs will soon be Old Boys, and we in their stead as leaders of the institution. Though there was more “rain” on the Baski courts than anywhere else in School that night, take heart my dear readers, for when these departing Seniors come back, it will be with tales of global exploit, to thrill you once more.

And now we go to our in-house meteorologist, (me), with the weather! We were granted temporary reprieve thanks to the showers on Monday morning, but I would suggest that if you want that to continue, gather a few friends, and do one of the more simple rain dances, preferably no

sacrifice needed.

The CDH has been ramping up its corporate game, with its PPT skills on full display. Graphs and numbers have been put up for all to see, but it’s a shame that the screen’s velocity between slides is equivalent to the average Lockheed Martin Jet. Another oft-heard announcement these days is that Indian food is being served. It’s reassuring, if not slightly insane, to see that the “dal-chawal only, beta” gang of tradition is alive and well in the modern era.

A Form is to be congratulated on finishing their exams, for they are the valiant Horatios of the academic hour. For those staying back for cricket, apply that physics to your cricket bowling, or economics when calculating opportunity cost between net practices or futsal.

With PT ending, and exams just over the horizon, I wish everyone fortification of the soul, for this is it, once more unto the breach. Good luck!

Wordsearch | Dosco Lingo

- 1. Not doing your work properly; also used to refer to indolent people.
- 2. A person who consistently offers their unwanted presence.
- 3. To derive entertainment by *allowing* your Juniors to *voluntarily* provide it.
- 4. Being a nice and disciplined person just for the sake of it, *not for any ulterior motives at all*.
- 5. The best way in School to place a reservation.
- 6. The last minute resort for missing class or morning PT.
- 7. A surplus of haughtiness and arrogance.
- 8. A fresh cup of diluted chocolate milk to wake you up.
- 9. The place where the best ~~extra~~-PTs late evening workouts occur.

P H K D U N H B A G S Q H Q A S C S B Q
E Y F U H J A H E F Z P B K Q C Y V Z R
W W Y N U M Y L G R H D C I X G J N U X
C T S U N U G B K S O A X N E O G Z A X
G S B S J W Y A V F L N C M E N W L M N
F K W W F P K J C S B M D Q S V E J C D
Z D N P E I M K Z T S X U T C R D K Z F
I S I D Y L S Q M A A R R Q C X D A J M
T U P P N E C P A I V I N Q N I L G L Z
N Y S A T O G G N T Z M G R U D R J Z L
E H O O H N K Q A Y B J F P Y A D F B B
O V H O Z I D P U Y S Y U N O U V E S B
Z C Z Q D V O G I E O R S G S Q V V G R
X R F D D C B M K Q J R R N G P T C H A
W E E V S K C O G H D T S A B M W G V M
L D R K H A Z J A L X K V N H E M A Z U
T S R Z V L O E X K Z X G W Q R R M J F
F R P M W Q B O H D U C G B C U B W N B
E D G A Z A I P M U L A I B A R M P O P
S A X V Z I T T A J J J R T C J W Y S I

Answers

1. Slack

2. Pile on

3. Enit

4. Scopat

5. Bags

6. Hospi

7. Atti

8. Chores

9. Quad

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