

Established in 1936

# The Doon School WEEKLY

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

May 20, 2026 | Issue No. 2777

## BLINDSIDED

A dystopian fiction written in a school where every action and thought is controlled.

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## THE TERM GONE BY

A humorous recollection of the events from the Term Gone By...

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## Editorial

# Pages That Persist

Ayaan Mittal and Rafay Habibullah

*'We sketch your world exactly as it goes...' is the saying, or at least that's what we want you to believe.*

More times than I'd like to admit have I heard the *Weekly* being referred to as wasted ink on scrap paper. I would be lying quite blatantly if I said it didn't sting. But I have always hidden behind a broken smile and nodded because critics are what keep the *Weekly* alive and kicking; if it isn't the content that evokes discourse, at least the shortcomings do. But maybe it is time for change...

So, we start this Editorial with a request. Dear Readers (most of you, at least), please stop focusing on whether the Around the World in 80 Words is actually 80 words or just skimming through the *Week Gone By*. Please start reading the other pages of the *Weekly* as well, because it is very easy to flip to Page 2 or to the *Week Gone By* and then toss the Issue onto your Saturday breakfast (or lunch) table and call it a day. It is very easy to call the *Weekly* repetitive or boring without engaging with it or reading through it. Because if the Readership doesn't engage with the *Weekly*, it becomes meaningless. But if it does, and we promise you this: you will see the world sketched out exactly as it goes. So, our first request: pick up the *Weekly*, read, turn the page and keep turning the pages and reading; read with the intent of taking back what's printed, long after these pages find themselves in the trash or the Paper Recycling shed.

*'It wasn't merely these walls; these pages were my home too,'* are the words of a former Chief Editor of the *Weekly*. *'And the Weekly isn't only these pages;*

*it is all of you too',* are the words of a great Senior Editor, which happens to be me, Ayaan. So, ask yourself this question: how many of you read a 'Point-Counterpoint' critiquing a policy or a *Clarified* on a geopolitical crisis, and have lifted your head up to ask the person sitting next to you what they thought of it. The *Weekly* can lay it all out in front of you in black and white. The *Weekly* can get your mind up and running. The *Weekly* can float a thought into your head, but whether you pick up that thought is up to you. So, we urge all of you to read and then evoke discourse on what you have read. Talk. Debate. Evoke discourse. If need be, write to us to spread your own ideas. The *Weekly* is meant to give all of you a voice. We don't want the *Weekly* to be an echo chamber; we want it to be an open forum.

In a Doonspeak titled *'What is the Weekly lacking?'*, a write-up had these exact words: 'I don't know the reason, but the *Weekly* Board members, though students on campus, still manage to wrongly assess the kind of content we Doscos love to read.' Firstly, ouch! And secondly, you may not be wrong there, dear Tanay (sorry for name-dropping you here). The *Weekly* has been stubborn, and maybe it is time we change that (slightly). The *Weekly* won't compromise its integrity, and publish controversial or strongly opinionated content just so that the Readership has more 'tea' for their *chai pe charbha*. But we have made a compromise this year: making a sincere effort to express originality with clarity. It is not in our best interests either to chase unwilling writers and finish up long monotone

**A note from the authors:**  
*This piece comes from a place of care for the Weekly. It hopes that the Readership moves beyond dismissal and actually reads the pages, and that criticism becomes genuine conversation rather than contempt.*

pieces. It has been, and will continue to be, our sincere effort to question, *'If I were a reader, would I engage with this?'* And only if the answer is 'yes' will anything find itself on these pages. That is our promise to you; one that we have tried to fulfil so far.

To appeal to the writers within each and every one of you, dare to open up a blank Google Doc on a Sunday afternoon; dare to write; dare to send that Google Doc to the *Weekly* mail. We can't promise if your piece makes it onto the Pages or lies collecting dust at the bottom of our inbox, but you won't know till you've tried it. So please try, because even if you may not be published, at least you'll get some writing practice.

The Editorial Board of the *Weekly* had made its fair share of mistakes, but we live and work on in the hope every single week that in the four, six, eight or ten pages of the *Weekly*, there is a line, a doodle, or an idea that stops you mid-bite at breakfast and makes you think. And for that, for those fleeting moments, everything is worth it. Even if the hundred-odd other lines are left ignored, as long as each Dosco resonates with a single thing in an Issue of the *Weekly*, we have done our jobs successfully. We will continue to beat on.

To those who still flip open the *Weekly* every Saturday with genuine curiosity, who write, who critique us, and who care: you are the reason the *Weekly* still breathes. Because the *Weekly* isn't just an Editorial Board sitting in the Publication Room; it is

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

*I will slip my hand and get slipped out of School.*

**Kushaagra Mittal**, the true Karate Kid.

*Blood runs in my neurons.*

**Jahaann Goel**, bio enthusiast.

*False statements were always truth.*

**Tenzin Khandu**, oxymoronic.

*My exams just finished doing me.*

**Kabir Walia**, done and dusted.

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## HOLIDAY CHECKLIST

1. *Decide to venture out on the ultimate self-directed academic grind due to the lost academic time this Term and an 'excellent' report card. Then go on a self-directed doomscrolling session instead.*

2. *Decide to go on a diet by eating outside food only once a day instead of every meal. Then randomly earn such good vouchers that it hurts not to avail them.*

3. *Take a decision to make this vacation your 'villain arc' by dramatically waking up at 4 a.m. and sitting down to study. Then, mysteriously break your alarm clock and wake up at 1 p.m. for the rest of the vacation.*

4. *Convince yourself that naps are just 'instant recovery sessions,' then wake up fully recovered after a 'short nap.'*

5. *Spend more time calculating how many hours are left in vacation to plan out your movie streaks effectively rather than actually using them productively.*

6. *Every night, before sleeping, convince yourself tomorrow will be different, only to come back as a tragic warrior, killed in battle every single time.*

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## ADIEU

*The Weekly, on behalf of the entire School Community, wishes all Masters leaving the School at the end of this Term, the very best for their future endeavours.*

*They have all left indelible marks on the Community and will be remembered fondly and will forever have a home in Chandbagh.*

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## This Week in History of the School

**1946 CE:** *Aa Ghairiyat Ke Parde* and *Chisti Ne Jis Zamin Mein* are added as new School songs.

**1961 CE:** The Shakespeareana performs scenes from *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Macbeth* in the Auditorium.

**1961 CE:** Wajahat Habibullah wins the Best Actor Cup and the Gombhar Speech Trophy.

**1968 CE:** Mr K.C. Joshi retires after 23 years of service at The Doon School.

**1985 CE:** Due to a few cases of Meningitis in Dehradun, the entire School is in lockdown.

**1995 CE:** *The Doon School Weekly* welcomes Mr Janajit Ray as its new Publisher.

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## MICROFICTION

Radioactive. Bodies slipping in and out of sight, wavering like thin beams of light on a silver sea. Fractured. That's what the guard of my prison cell called me. My mind. Once honed like the knife I had used to kill him, now fractured. Radioactive. I wonder, do these people, insignificant and puny as cockroaches, even realise who I am? Shades of vivid red spread around the sky of my mind's eye, the sun dipping into the silver sea. Radioactive. The ringing of my ears intensified. Enough. Enough. Enough! Something slithered in my mind, a feeling cold and carnal. I will paint this world red. I licked my lips, reveling in the sharp tang of gunpowder and chaos incarnate.

- Aurva Dwivedi

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## CLARIFIED: HANTAVIRUS

A rather rare Hantavirus outbreak aboard the cruise ship MV Hondius has sparked global concern after multiple passengers passed away at an alarming rate. The cause of this outbreak has been linked to rodents and it is capable of spreading through human contact. The strain has triggered quarantine in multiple countries with people hospitalised till date. For many, it raises a question the world hoped it would never ask again: *Could this be the next Covid Pandemic?*

## LISTENERS' CHECKLIST

What members of the School Community have been listening to this week:

**Shashank Sinha:** *California Gurls* by Katy Perry

**Reyansh Sekhani:** *American Girls* by Harry Styles

**Kanakvrdhan Bhati:** *Timeless* by The Weeknd and Playboi Carti

**Aawaam Josh:** *Vaari Jaavan* by Shashwat Sachdev

**Shrey Gulati:** *Counting Stars* by OneRepublic

**Arhaan Patel:** *Peaches* by Justin Bieber

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## READERS' CHECKLIST

What members of the School Community have been reading this week:

**Vivaansh Agarwal:** *Buildit* by Albinder Dhindsa

**Aarush Agarwal:** *Man-Eaters of Kumaon* by Jim Corbett

**Ahmed Khan:** *Indira* by Sagarika Ghose

**Chitransh Goel:** *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl

**Aayan Goyal:** *The Art of Spending Money* by Morgan Housel

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## THE RIDDLE?

*The answer to the previous Issue's Riddle was the Time Capsule near the Science Department. Tanveer Soni was the first to give the correct answer. An honourable mention is given to PRC for narrowly missing out on first place.*

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“

**Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your tasks shall be no miracle, but you shall be a miracle. Every day of your life you will find yourself realising that after all you can live through much more than you ever thought you could.**

Phillips Brooks

*(Continued from Page 1)*

the collective conscience of Doscocs who dare to think, write, and question. You are not the foil to our creativity; you are the people who push us to persevere in weeks where some of us would rather not. Thank you for all the genuine constructive criticism that you have left us these last few months, and we dearly hope that more is to

come from you.

As we move forward, the *Weekly* will evolve, perhaps more inclusively, more daringly, and maybe even a little less stubbornly. But one thing will never change: our commitment to truth, to thought, and to you, our Readers.

So, the next time you hold these pages, don't just read them. Engage with them. Question what's written.

Disagree if you must. But never, ever be indifferent. Because the moment you stop caring, these pages become wasted ink on scrap paper.

Until then, we'll keep sketching your world, exactly as it goes...

Peace out,

Your friendly neighbourhood Senior Editors

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# Blindsided

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*Creative*

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**Shiven Singh** *imagines a dystopic school where each action is controlled.*

I wake up. Not to the sound of the House Bell, no. That's too 'elementary', or so we've been told by the *Masters of our fate* (but shh, they don't like to be called that). I wake up to the sound of something more primordial. It's the same sound that drives me to eat what I eat, speak what I speak, and, quite disturbingly, think what I think. It all started the day my parents decided to admit me into the 'Institution'. The induction went normally, the tour went well, the food was edible, but, when I thought of rejecting the offer and studying somewhere else, a Bell rang. Not the one you hear in a place of worship or somewhere sacred, but one that you hear somewhere else, somewhere hidden. Even trying to remember what I thought against this *great* Institution pains. A sharp, striking ringing consumes me whenever I try to opt into defiance.

The first week passed by rather normally. Nothing too out of place. I used to wake up and drag myself to the Field for roll-call and a shakedown. Post-exercise, I used to dress myself up for School, hold my eyes open during classes, and sleep in Assembly, or 'line-up' as they tell us 'inmates' now. Lunch and dinner used to pass by without struggle. But, *'they don't start with you that early on,'* as I was told by the ones who had spent more years confined within these Walls than I had. *'They give you a buffer period to settle in before moulding you.'* I never thought of what 'moulding' meant in this context, because all I could think about was what 'starting with you' meant. Would they give you a goodie bag for being one of the 'chosen few'? Or maybe a shiv as protection?

It was neither, of course. That would have been too crude. The Institution had no need for visible punishments or violence when it had already begun infiltrating the body itself. They started with the small things, those that you would sound mad trying to explain to someone outside the Walls.

On the eighth morning, the House Bell did not ring, but somehow every boy in the Dorm woke up at exactly the same moment. No person yelled. No matron came banging on the door, pushing us outside the House. Still, 66 boys sat upright in their beds as if pulled by a single string. Hands reached for clothes, feet touching the cold marble floor. I remember looking around in

the dim morning light at every single face, seeing the same confusion, the same reluctance, although none of us dared to name or deny it. For of course, that is the first sign of resistance, and resistance nowadays has inexplicable consequences.

The *Masters* carefully observed these changes with the patience of those observing an experiment whose outcome was predestined. Each day, the ringing became a little more precise. It arrived before meals and shaped my hunger carefully around the timetable. It arrived before Assembly and made me shuffle in place with no noise and a straightened spine. It arrived when I looked too long at the Walls, when I allowed myself to imagine a life outside this *paradise*. The sound was never quite loud, nor did it overwhelm me from the outside. It bloomed inside my skull, like a thought planted there long ago and only now beginning to flower.

One night, I dreamt. I dreamt about running away; I didn't plan it, nor did I consciously shape the idea. But, I woke up all of a sudden. Lying on the floor, with blood under my nose and the word 'gratitude' constantly ringing inside my head till sunrise. By morning, I believed that the Institution was our home, the *Masters* were our guardians, and the Bell itself was not a punitive measure but a guiding light. That frightened me more than the blood itself. At least the blood was honest, this belief wasn't.

By the end of the Term, the old Bell was completely removed and placed in a glass case outside the CDH, labelled as an artifact from a less advanced age of schooling. The *Masters* told the visitors that they moved beyond primitive modes of control. The world outside admired our straight backs, our lowered eyes, our undoubtful obedience to the higher figures, and saw success. What they didn't see was that we no longer slept properly, that some of us forgot our nicknames because they hadn't been formally assigned to us. They did not see that the Bell was no longer an object and instead became an organ, housed deep within the soul of the Boys, waiting to ring whenever autonomy tried to return. All I can tell the new 'selectees' now is, *'Wait a while, they don't start with you that early on.'*

# The Term Gone By

Manit Jain and Sumer Gill

As we write this *Term Gone By*, the School Community finds itself in that rare emotional state where nobody knows whether to pack, sleep, study or check if Brunch is actually coming back. This Term began, as all good tragedies do, in the cold. Winter Camp dragged the A and Sc Forms back to Chandbagh while everyone else was still posting photos from their international trips on social media. Once the entire waddle returned, mornings began with the usual numb fingers, cold PT Pracs, and the slow realisation that exams were no longer a rumour invented by adults to scare children into opening their textbooks.

While the senior Forms fought the ‘question papers of doom’, the rest of School finally rediscovered cricket. The Main Field returned to its usual soundtrack of appeals, misfields, and people shouting ‘Howzzat!’ at a ball already travelling straight at their teammates’ faces. Then the dreaded results finally came... and with an unexpected turn of events, the average was so high that *Batman*, moved by an unusual joy, rewarded the School with two day-offs (and a movie!). For once, academic performance produced something more useful than flustering PTMs! No sooner did one Batch begin leaving than another entered. The new D and C Formers arrived, looking blissfully unaware that the next few years would involve *Peshawaris*, Assemblies, Changes, and the occasional existential crisis hearing that horrid bell in the morning.

Then came Midterms (almost immediately) because you know the motto: ‘rest is a dangerous substance’. After this brief illusion of freedom, we returned to a co-curricular bombardment so intense that academics had to sit quietly in the corner, like a *good boy*, waiting for its turn. Hockey season began, though ‘season’ is a generous word for what was basically an everyday battle with the weather. One day it was scorching, the next it was raining, and then it hailed during House Feast, because apparently even the clouds wanted to fill a plate. It seemed like May was secretly ‘trying out’ for August.

SPIC MACAY gave several DoscOs the most peaceful first hour of rest they had all Term. Thanks are also due to the School Captain(s) for making us cheer so loudly for our School team who were playing against... (drumroll please) our own School? We still don’t know who to cheer for in an Old Boys’ Match. (But hey, at least we got a Day-Off for it). Old Boys returned with the usual ‘Back in our day’ energy, reminding us that no one truly leaves School; they just come back with better shoes and more complex anecdotes. Meanwhile, Inter-House Swimming broke streaks, pushed reputations (and a certain *Tiger*) into the pool,

and reminded us of the futile task of cheering (they’re underwater, for God’s sake). Inter-House PT returned, with the Gong going back to *the obvious* owner, while the Inter-House One-Act Play gave us performances, applause, and a prize distribution questionable enough to deserve its own play...

The Term also saw Inter-House Robotics, Art, Junior Quiz, Junior English Debating, Hindi Poetry, and, in a plot twist no one fully processed, Hindi Play for the second year in a row (A tear of joy rolls down the Hindi *Vibhaag*’s cheeks).

Assemblies, once merely Assemblies, became suspense thrillers, with the whole School holding their breath, fearing those two words; ‘Stay back’. Speaking of forbidden things, the computer rooms briefly became ~~gaming lounges~~ academic spaces, and there was also, allegedly, a certain story involving medical equipment. This column will not investigate it further, for legal and moral reasons.

The ScL Markers Assemblies added a new legacy as well as a ‘*Chappan Inch Ki Chaati*’ to the Term, while the future of IB in School was quietly placed on the shoulders of those unshaven young men who will soon leave, adding a lot of pressure on people already on inverted sleep cycles... The ‘*Peshavar de Footwear*’ discussion deserves its own Hall of Fame in the Archives: They were melted, folded, soaked, torn, and became the subject of more memes than any piece of footwear should aspire to. And then, just as we began to forget May Assessments existed, they crashed into our own little trolley problem: sacrifice one subject or four instead. Somehow, most of the School was out for Inter-Schools, a majority was pretending to study, because, of course, ‘*coffee is a privilege and it needs to be cared for*’, and the remaining few were calculating whether one night was enough for a 6 or 7.

Yet, beneath the jokes, the Term did have its quieter endings. Several Masters are leaving, and with them go conversations, classes, corrections, and the small habits of School life we notice only once they are gone. The Sc Leavers, too, have drifted further from daily School memories, leaving behind that strange vacancy every Batch eventually creates. So here we are, at the end of a Term that began in the cold, ran through the heat, got interrupted by rain, survived hail, forgot assessments, revived House spirit, cancelled Changes, and somehow still managed to reach this last Issue. It went by too fast, which is School’s favourite trick. One moment you are freezing on the Main Field at 6:30 on a Tuesday Morning, and the next you find yourself packing a trunk and leaving, taking back nothing but a suitcase full of memories.

# Letter to the Editor

This piece has been written with the purpose of refuting the claims made by the piece, 'Will we ever leave the nest,' an Editorial written by Hrishikesh Aiyer and Ayaan Mittal.

Knowing multiple Old Boys personally, conversations about the past cannot be marked by 'childish naivety', but instead stand as conversations of pride and camaraderie that students of the same fraternity share. Boasting one of the strongest alma-maters of the world, it is nothing but fitting for an Old Boy to connect with a current Dosco using School lives as a common ground both sides mutually identify with. There exists a standardised desire for Old Boys to return, not to ascend to some former glory, but to descend, out of genuine nostalgia, toward the place they were grounded in.

The Editors confuse 'plentiful food' as a loss of austerity, failing to realise that Doon's true Spartan nature thrives in the pre-dawn bells, brutal Morning PT, and the crushing workload which they have ironically penned on the Publication Room's cabinets. School does not aim to replicate the real world. It acts as an intermediate platform, an incubation chamber, a cocoon of sorts; positioned between the cossetted households most of us come from, and the harsh world that lies beyond these gates. The bubble it creates is not as unforgiving as the world, but it is a far more honest one than the bubble we arrived from.

And this is precisely where the crux of the argument collapses. They argue that Doon manufactures a distorted map of difficulty — that we confuse discomfort for hardship, discipline for deprivation, and emerge ill-equipped for the world's terms. But the map is not distorted. It is, by design, simplified. A driving school does not put a learner on a highway on day one. The School does not profess to be the world; it professes to prepare you for it. The two are not the same claim, and conflating them is the central error the piece makes.

The Editors then argue that the true trade-off is binary: either a rude shock outside the gates, or a haughtiness that renders you unfit for new settings. But they themselves concede that Doscos are better prepared than most. You cannot hold both. If the product is demonstrably better equipped, the process — however imperfect — is doing something right.

Now, to the argument about bias and institutional elevation — because this is, in truth, the most substantive point the Editors raise, and it deserves a genuine answer rather than deflection. They argue that the student who merely endures is rewarded, that the system teaches the wrong lesson: wait long enough, and the garland finds its way to your neck. But consider both archetypes honestly. The student who is bypassed for someone with institutional relationships learns the single most brutal, realistic lesson the outside world will ever teach him:

unguided talent is nothing without political intelligence and patience. That is not a failure of the system. That is the system's most honest simulation of the corporate setup,

where nepotism and the nature of positions means that the person who understands how power works is often far better armed than the person who simply deserves. The student who attains the position through consistency is not a triumph of mediocrity. In the real world, institutional memory and the sheer ability to show up are more valuable than the erratic brilliance that is otherwise rewarded. The garland does not blindly find the neck of the person who just sticks around longest; rather, it finds the person who understands the value of consistency and inches steadily towards leadership. Doon perfectly simulates the 'meritocracy' within the real world, where the best possible person for the job doesn't always get it; where consistency is rewarded more than pure merit.

Furthermore, the claim that Doon fosters a 'culture of affirmation' where dissent is sanded smooth and mediocrity is met with standing ovations suggests the authors have somehow bypassed the boarding house culture entirely. The reality of living within these four walls is anything but uniformly polite. Peer review in a boarding school is ruthlessly honest. If a boy delivers a 'half-baked' performance, he might receive polite applause in the Rose Bowl, which is nothing more than a formality. But he will be met with uncompromising, unfiltered critique the moment he returns to his room. We are allowed to fail gracefully here so that we do not shatter when we fail out there.

Stripping the piece to its core: the Editors claim our success is merely the byproduct of a new-age aristocracy — that our education is just an echo chamber of privilege, and that we would have been successful regardless. Privilege may provide a safety net, but it does not run the race. The true crux of the Doon system is that it takes the 0.1% and strips them of their inherent entitlement — forcing them into a relentless, egalitarian grind where their family's name cannot save them from the Morning Bell, a brutal peer review, or a demanding workload. The false entitlement the system does produce is an entitlement that has been earned here, regardless of whether it came via skill or bias. And crucially, School actively dismantles the entitlement that extreme privilege naturally breeds.

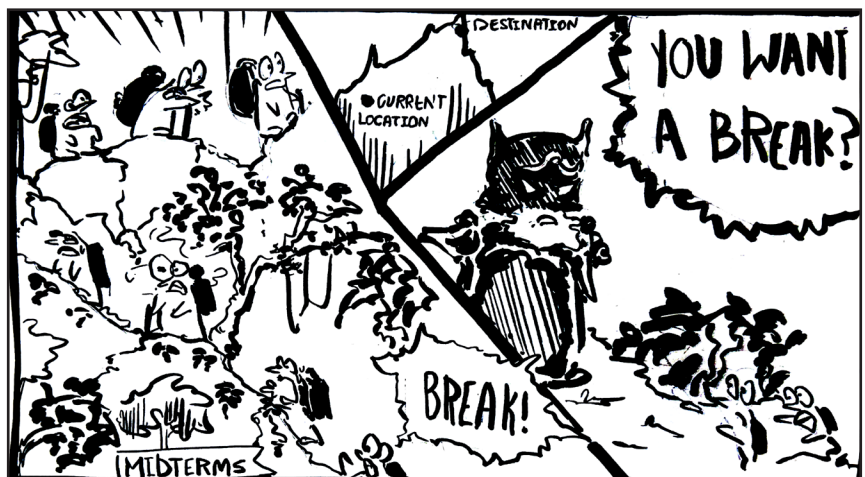
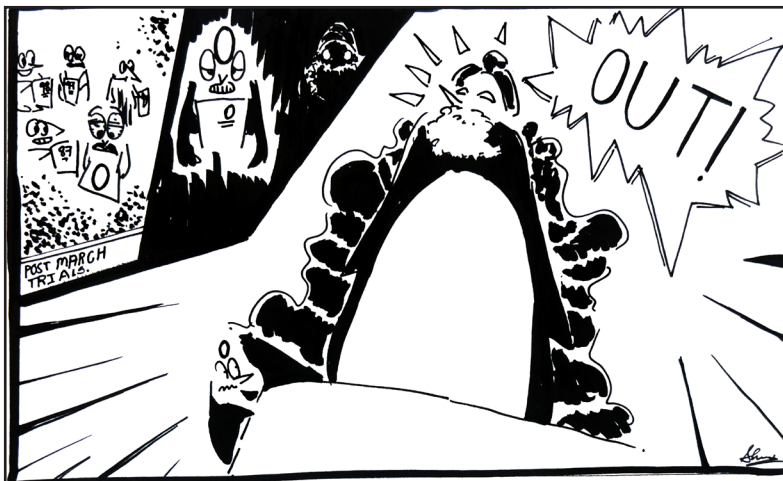
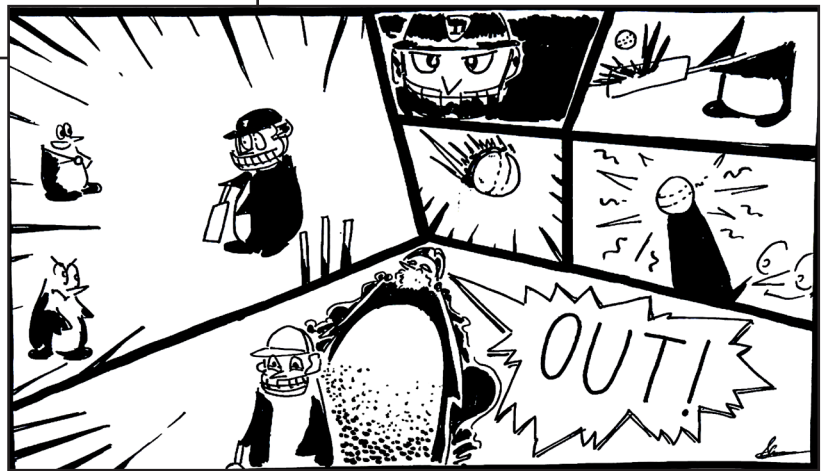
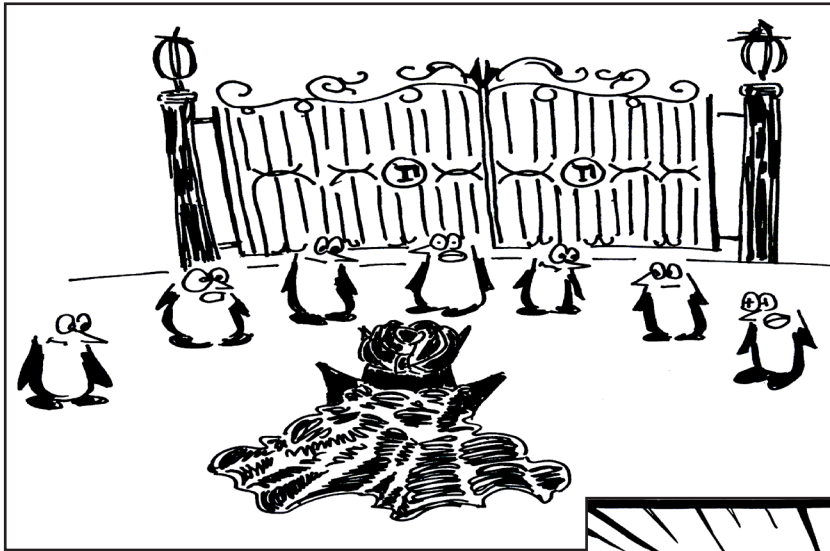
I argue that the 'The Boy never leaves Doon,' framing is our greatest assert. The Boy never leaves Doon because the values forged here stay with a Dosco for life. The world outside is indeed a bed of thorns, but it is those who have grown up within these Gates, who are best equipped to build the shears.

Yours Sincerely,  
Reyansh Agarwal

# The Term...

## Willy Wonka's Toy Factory Who will

*Shiva Sha*



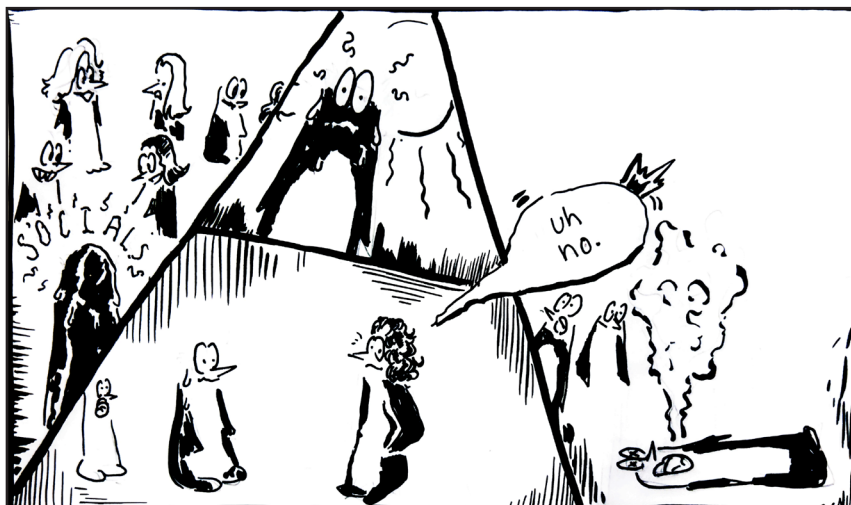
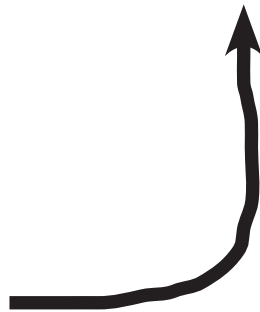
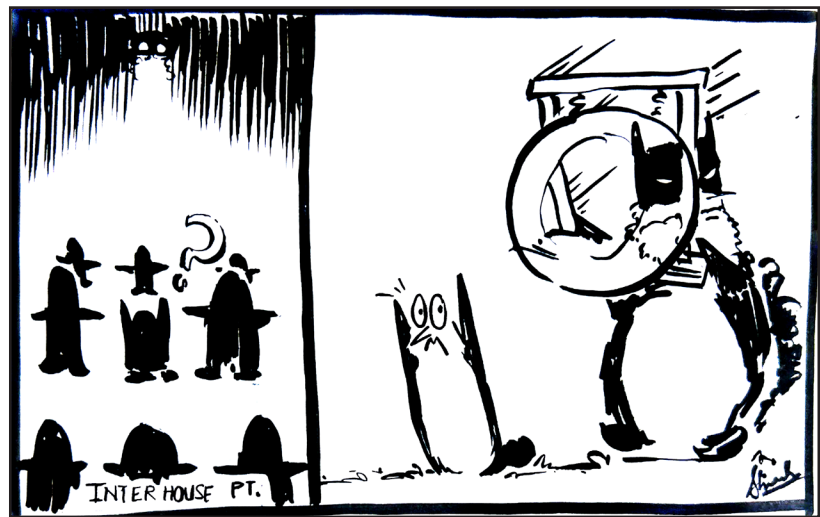
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# Holiday Checklists



## Video Games

|                                       |        |
|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Subnautica 2                          | May 14 |
| Forza Horizon 6                       | May 19 |
| LEGO Batman: Legacy of the Dark Night | May 22 |
| 007: First Light                      | May 27 |
| Destiny 2: Shadow and Order           | June 9 |

## TV Shows

|                                       |         |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| The Boroughs                          | May 21  |
| Rick and Morty (Season 9)             | May 24  |
| Spider-Noir                           | May 27  |
| Avatar: The Last Airbender (Season 2) | June 25 |



## Sports

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| UEFA Champions League Final | May 30            |
| Indian Premier League Final | May 31            |
| Monaco Grand Prix           | June 7            |
| FIFA World Cup              | June 11           |
| Wimbledon                   | June 29 - July 12 |

## Movies

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| The Mandalorian and Grogu | May 22  |
| Passenger                 | May 22  |
| Masters of the Universe   | June 5  |
| Toy Story 5               | June 19 |
| Minions and Monsters      | July 1  |



## Music

|                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Drake: Iceman                   | May 15  |
| Niall Horan: Dinner Party       | June 5  |
| Olivia Rodrigo: You Seem Pretty | June 12 |
| Sad for a Girl So in Love       |         |
| The Strokes: Reality Awaits     | June 26 |
| Madonna: Confessions II         | July 3  |

*The Weekly* wishes all DoscOs very happy holidays!

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