

# The Delusional.

FEB 2020



**GIRNAR HOUSE**  
Board for  
Student Publications

"ध्वनियों की आहट से भय है  
कुछ करने की चाहत से भय है"

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मानस भय-मिथ्या

## *Letter from the Paranoids*

Everybody has a face that they hold inside  
A face that awakes when I close my eyes  
A face that watches every time they lie  
A face that laughs every time they fall  
~Papercut (Linkin Park)

A Papercut is a minor injury, which others tend not to understand. The injured tries in vain to make others relate to his pain, but is trapped in a vicious cycle, wherein he silently suffers his injury, tries to express his pain, fails and then suffers even more. Delusion gradually creeps in as he tries to justify his suffering to himself.

On this happy note, Greetings! This magazine is a collection of stories that seek to portray Delusion and Paranoia in different contexts. A photostory runs throughout the magazine, superpositioning the two elements in the life of a student, as he wakes up in his hostel room and walks towards the lecture hall, something every student at IITD can relate to. These delusions are, of course, after-effects of the Papercut.

The Weave, Jhatka या Halaal talks about the story of a college student undergoing systematic & perpetual bullying that goes unnoticed, leading to a slow painful end. When he loses all emotional support, he leaves behind a diary as he takes a stairway to heaven. The story is about the realization by the perpetrators, how they ignored him, mocked him and reprimanded him; and attempts to draw relevance to our lives.

The Vital Balance, our headliner, brings into focus the negative impacts of student politics at IITD. We seek to bring out the paranoia that engulfs the institute every year, leaving a trail of broken friendships and grades in its wake. Through a survey and an interview, we underscore the fact that political victories often come at great personal costs.

Lastly, the poem मानस भय-मिथ्या, takes the reader into the Chakravayuh of paranoia where the person is afraid of even being afraid. Eventually, he resolves to break the shackles of perpetual fear and comes out victorious.

Through Weave, we show the journey from a papercut to the delusional world while in the headliner we consolidate the established theme of delusions and finally, we move from the delusional world towards a resolution, back to the conventional world. We hope you are able to enjoy this journey and find the stories relatable.





# Weave

## Jhatkaa या Halaal?

"I'd take death by guillotine  
Over a thousand papercuts unseen"

I don't think people should dream. At least not expect them to turn true.  
Dreams thrive expectations. expectations? disappointments.  
Disappointments give birth to anxiety.  
Anxiety makes you diffident.  
Diffidence sows paranoia.

### **Paranoia Kills YOU.**

\* \* \*

The rain-lords had been unquestionably generous that evening, and who wouldn't enjoy a breather from the scorching heat of late April. "You know how it can be in summer these days. Pollution in winters, and unbearable heat in summers. Is there even a good time to stay in this country?", exclaimed Rajan as he enjoyed a warm cup of tea at Shankar Dhaba with Zaid and Vikas, some of the best buddies he had made during his college life.

Shankar Dhaba, that resided adjacent to their hostel, had served countless students ever since the establishment of their college in the early 60s. Manjul kaka was at the helm of its current operations – the business already having transcended three generations of his family. Their hostel was set amidst the most beautiful and tree-laden part of New Delhi, but was an old and tiring building now.

Manjul kaka was unpleasantly happy today evening. While the rains had made it difficult to operate, he was sure to be going back home with a clinking wallet that night.

"Bro, why do you even study at this college? Why didn't you just study abroad in the first place? Our country needs

you less than you need this country, understand.", erupted Vikas, imperatively placing his cup of cutting-chai on the old but sturdy wooden bench that he was sitting on. The bench squeaked as he started towards Rajan, and Manjul kaka quietly grabbed some pakodas to enjoy another episode of Rajan v/s Vikas by Shankar Dhaba. His motion nearly synchronized with an enormous wave of lightning that gloriously illuminated the evening sky.

"Why don't we go somewhere?", interrupted Zaid even before the thunder could reach their ears. He had no idea what a let-down he was to Manjul kaka's ear-drums that were hungry for a tussle in that perfect cinematic setting he had always imagined.

"Why are you all looking at me like that? The weather is awesome, the forecast says it's going to stay this way throughout the week. Let's go somewhere over the weekend."

Shankar Dhaba had been the brewing point of all their college plans for the last four years. After two hours of quarrelling, fighting, negotiating and excitement, they finally seemed to have reached some consensus.

"We should ask Yudhraj as well. Wonder what he does in his room all day!", announced Zaid. And everyone conformed with not having met him since morning. "That skull-face would ruin the entire trek, man. I don't want to be stopped because one person got no more gas to move", objected Vikas. "I am not coming if Yudhraj isn't. Period.", protested Zaid. And they all started to march towards Yudhraj's room, the last room in their corridor, these days happened to be trodden over only by Yudhraj's own footsteps, except of course for the black cat with bright green eyes that guarded their wing all night.

\* \* \*

Yudhraj was a lean, yet tall man. Quiet in demeanour, messy in actions. He had almost developed the knack of always ending-up being the butt of all jokes his friends ever made. From locking his room from outside before classes, to making skeletons on his door to razz his physique, or throwing crackers into his room during Diwali, Rajan and Vikas had played every trick in the book to satiate themselves off the agony of Yudhraj. He had almost always been that monk-like figure who would never hit back or swear at these provocations, rather just show his disapproval and leave.



But his relationship with Zaid was much different than anyone in the college. Zaid had been his roommate for the last three years, and had protected Yudhraj through his ever-so compassionate attitude all

throughout. Basically, Zaid was Yudhraj's safe space. But starting this semester, they had gotten single rooms, and Zaid had started to hangout with more "cool" friends in their group, almost setting himself free of

\* \* \*

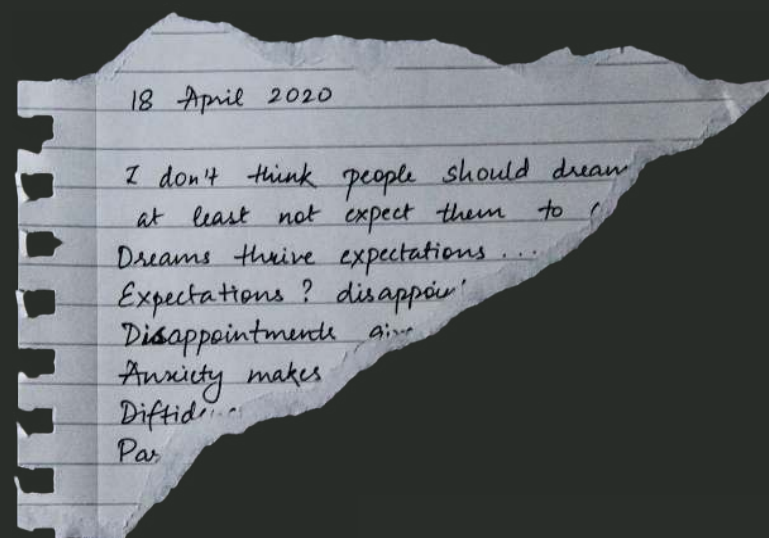
## Thud! Thudd! Thud!

The clanking of the metal chime that dorned Yudhraj's hostel door continued for over 10 minutes. The door had been bolted from inside and they guessed that he might have been asleep. As they knocked for longer, you could see streaks of strain emerge on Zaid's face. They had been oblivious of his presence for some time now and were unable to recall when they last saw him. They collectively concluded that they had last seen him two days ago at the Wednesday 5 pm lecture. Almost feeling sad for having been so ignorant, Vikas erupted again "Open the door in 2, or I'm gonna push the door back in".

Seeing no signs of response from the other side, they felt it was time to push against the door and remove its shackles. With an advance so determined that the American Rugby team would have been proud of, Vikas had set the old yellow door free from the latch at the top.

Next, they were all set in a state of shock. For one, the room was unbelievably clean; not at all characteristic of what they had pictured of Yudhraj all these years. The 10\*8 room was decorated with a neatly pressed bedsheet, a perfectly done almirah, a

glimmering mirror and some brilliant black curtains. Almost everyone instantly faced the realization that they had not been to his room even for once this semester. But more importantly, to their dismay, there was no one inside. The room was totally empty and you could almost hear noises ricochet back from the void. How on earth was the door bulleted from within? "Check the window!", gasped Vikas. Neh, not a chance. The window was tightly sealed and a flimsy and weak skeleton, like that of Yudhraj, would have no way succeeded in opening it. Five minutes of scratching their heads and Rajan announced "He must have used the ventilation shaft to bolt the door from outside". And seeing his room's chair outside in the corridor, reaffirmed the theory, he sure would have latched the bolt by pushing his hand through the ventilation shaft that rested above the door.

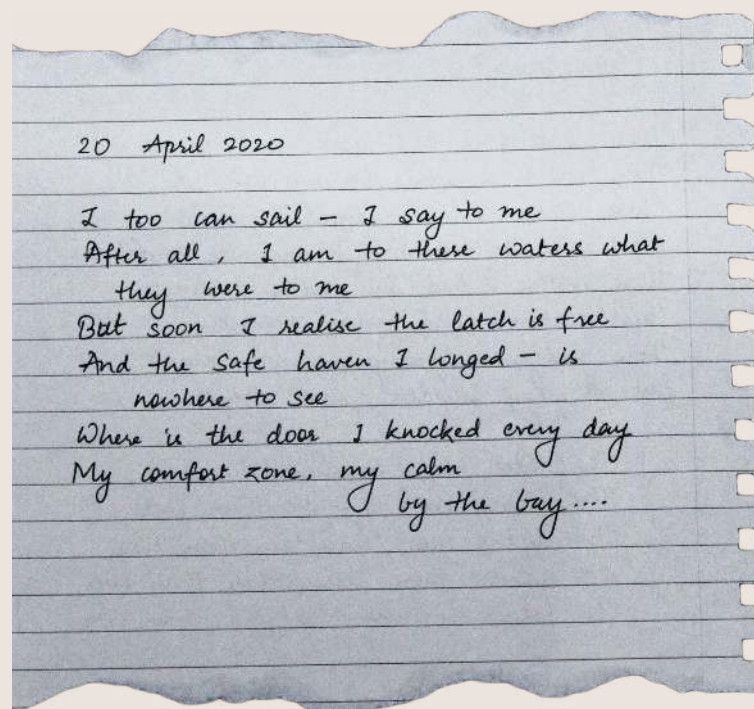
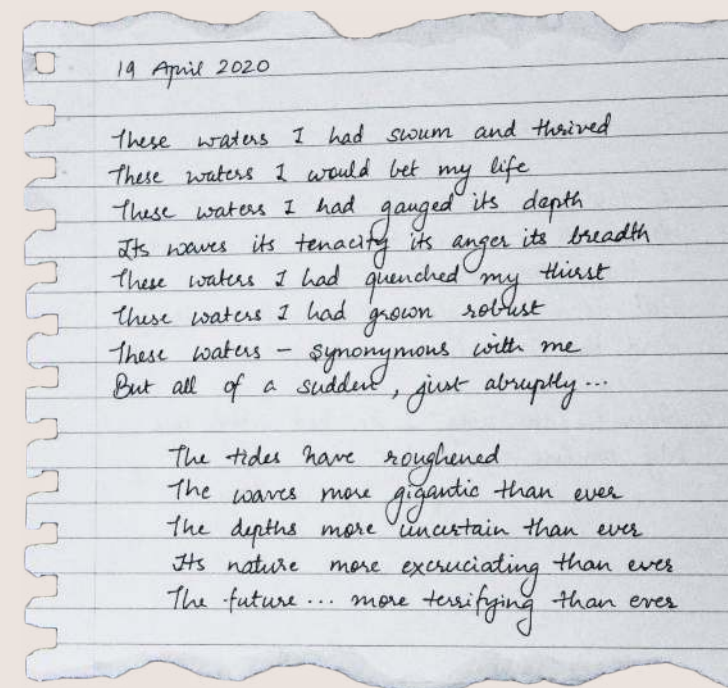


the burden of carrying Yudhraj on his shoulders. Yudhraj on the other hand seemed to be enjoying his time in solitude in his newly attained privacy, or at least that was what Zaid liked to believe.

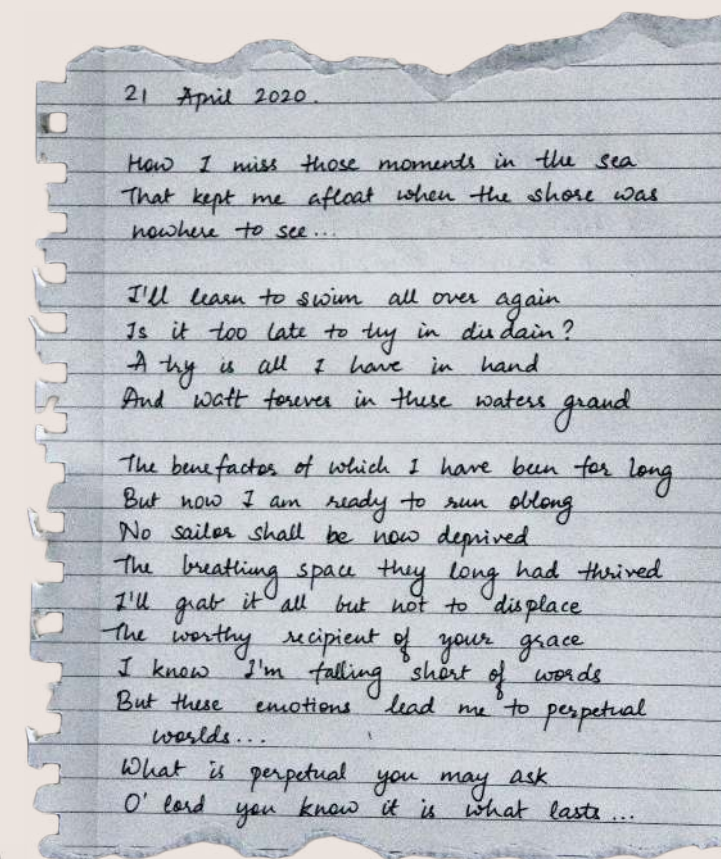
But problems had only begun. Almost everyone's heart was skipping beats by now. Having read so many tales of students committing suicide at their college, they could not help but allow their imaginations wander down the unwanted path. "Let's not overthink. Stay optimistic.", teathed Zaid as he reached for a small diary lying on Yudhraj's bed. Almost perfectly placed to appear to be hidden, but still, attract someone's attention. All these years of friendship and he hadn't even known that he wrote a diary, thought Zaid as he started to flip. The first entry in the diary was on 16th February that year, almost soothing Zaid's bouncing heart for a moment, thinking that Yudhraj had only started maintaining a diary this semester. He flipped the pages quickly to reach the end and understand what was going through his ex-roommate's mind. His search was interrupted at a torn page in the diary.

His eyeballs rolled back-and-forth, "I don't think people should dream". The line immediately struck a chord. "I have read this somewhere!", Zaid grew impatient. Scrolling through their common group's Whatsapp feed, Vikas found the same message by Yudhraj that night, only to be laughed at by him. Guilt and remorse was making Vikas and Rajan's hearts heavier than ever. How could they have been so loutish always. Would they ever know what this dream was? Zaid continued flipping.

Rajan could visibly see tears rolling down Zaid's eyes. As he looked at the tears traverse the length of his cheek, he could almost see every



moment when he insulted Yudhraj flash right in front of his eyes. "Am I the waters he is talking about? Please tell me I am not. Say it. Why don't you say something?", shouted Zaid at the highest note he had ever touched. He could not dare to flip further through the book and collapsed to the ground almost immediately. Continuing to plead for his good health as he bent over his knees, he threw the diary at the black curtains that ceased the evening light trying to peep into the room. Vikas collected the diary and garnered courage to flip further.



Zaid had almost condensed into a shell by now, he could no longer feel his hands, his breath, his heart, his soul. As he shrunk beneath the bed, he found a photo of him and Yudhraj lying half torn underneath. As he gently caressed the photograph, he was reminded of all the firsts they had shared, from the first night away from family, to the first time getting drunk, to the first time they went for a trek and numerous other priceless moments. He wasn't ready to face the inevitable. He summoned himself and mustered the courage to stand up. "I'll read this through. Give it to me", Zaid flipped to the next page.



22 April 2020

I'd take death by guillotine  
Over a thousand papercuts unseen  
Whose trauma and pain only I can feel  
All alone, with no one to heal  
I'll live a life of joy and smiles  
Away from the sea, in your paradise!

Rajan and Vikas had fallen to the floor. Their murderous hands reeked venom. They looked into the mirror and despised themselves. They did not want to own their own skin by now. The diary had just one more page. With shallow hearts, deep voices echoing in their mind, body and soul. They held the book in one hand and Zaid's shaking frame in the other. Together they flipped for one last time.

23 April 2020

I'm coming O' Lord - dispose the sin and vice  
I'm coming O' Lord to celebrate paradise  
To admire your birds in their tender nest  
Or the soothing light of the moon crest  
Or the dew drops on the jolly leaves  
Or the ecstatic monkeys on the trees  
Or the birds flying in a perfect V  
Or the lions joining in the melody  
Or the wiggles and giggles in a toddler's park  
Or the stars twinkling in the night gone dark  
I'm coming O' Lord - dispose the sin and vice  
I'm coming O' Lord to celebrate paradise...

\* \* \*

### **Paranoia Kills YOU.**

Diffidence sows paranoia.

Anxiety makes you diffident.

Disappointments give birth to anxiety.

Dreams thrive expectations. expectations? disappointments.

I don't think people should dream. At least not expect them to turn true.



# Headliner

## The Vital Balance

"Not losing track of the bigger picture in the wake of the paranoia of campus politics"



“Campaigns can get intensely competitive and in such situations, it is easy to lose sight of the larger picture.”

Student politics have always brought to the fore great leaders. And this is true especially in India, where the boomers have seen the rise of leaders like the late Arun Jaitley and where we, the GenZ's, can testify to the growth of Kanhaiya Kumar as a speaker if not anything else. IIT Delhi, however, has remained for the large part an apolitical institution from its inception in 1961, courtesy the extra-rigorous schedules, hefty assignments and given the nerds that we are! We are

known more for the CEOs we produce than great politicians or activists. But don't let this fool you into believing that we are entirely apolitical because come every March, the institute comes alive. This is that period of time when Gsec (General Secretary) and Secy (Secretary) hopefuls campaign extensively, cut deals and back-deals in an effort to secure votes towards their coronations as heads of student bodies, presiding over aspects like cultural activities, sports and hostel management, amongst others.

## About the Survey

For the purpose of collecting personal experiences, we conducted an anonymous survey, which was distributed amongst the residents of one hostel (Ginar). The survey was conducted on Google Forms and tested respondents on various questions not limited to what prompted them to become involved politically, whether they felt it was beneficial in any way or whether they regretted being involved at all. We received 120

undergraduate responses, an acceptable sample size, roughly 30% of the undergraduate strength of the test hostel.

IIT Bombay witnessed a particularly vitriolic election campaign this February, so we also reached out to an ex-member of their student media body, Insight for his comments on the impact of politics on students.

A clarification: for the purposes

In this process, students fail to see the bigger picture and end up ruining friendships, saying things they shouldn't have and often irreversibly spoiling their grades, things that may affect them at some point in the future. Through this article, we seek to explore the negative impacts of student politics in IITD as a function of its impact on a happy student life and the paranoia surrounding elections that affect not only the candidates but also their friends and fellow campaigners.

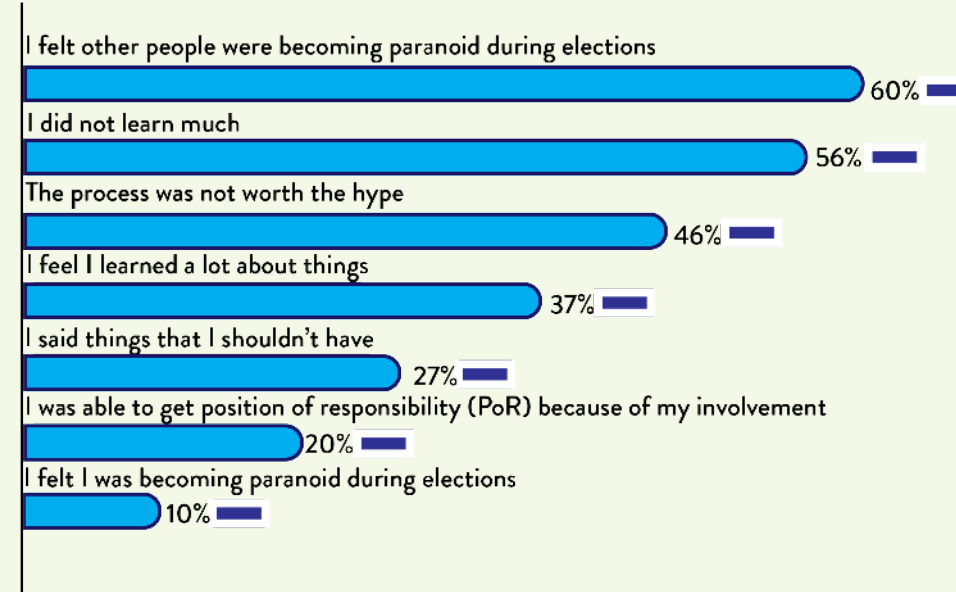
of this analysis, "Political involvement" means that the responder has either stood for elections for any post or whether he has actively vouched/campaigned/helped any friend while they were standing for elections, while "paranoia" would refer to giving so much importance towards something, that it is characterized by fear or anxiety.

## The mechanics of being "politically involved"

While a whopping 83% of responders were politically involved because a close friend of theirs was standing for election, 25% of respondents were involved because of peer pressure. That a significant percentage of people get involved because of peer pressure, should wave a red flag.

Regarding the benefits they derived from their involvement, every 1 in 2 of politically involved respondents felt that they had not derived anything useful from the process. Expectedly, this dropped to 34% for those who had stood for elections themselves. While student politics are considered to be

great learning opportunities, the rates of dissatisfaction with the quantum of benefit they received (at IITD) were particularly high (1 in 2!). In the absence of similar data from other colleges, however, it becomes difficult to determine if the dissatisfaction is greater/lesser in IIT Delhi than elsewhere.



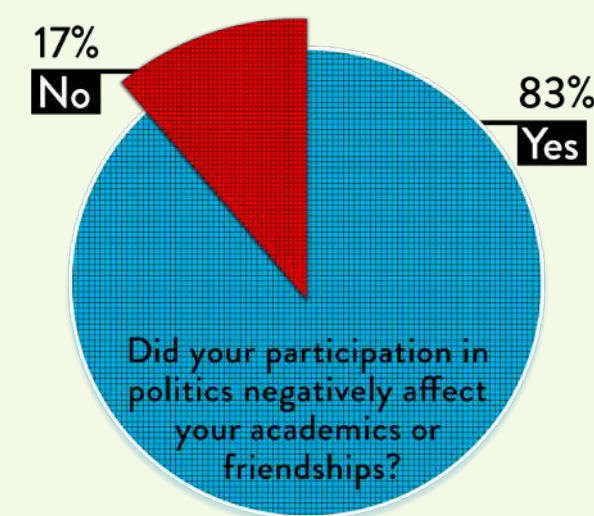
"Engagement in political activities in the institute changes a student's life in a multifaceted manner. While student politics is an essential pillar of campus democracy, the repercussions are significant for everyone involved, not just the candidates. Having closely observed over 4 elections at IIT Bombay, I can say that the students involved find it very difficult to balance their political involvement with their other commitments, including academics. Campaigns can get intensely competitive and in such situations, it is easy to lose sight of the larger picture. It's saddening to observe friendships getting strained and groups getting divided. Cumulatively, the process does

end up affecting the mental well-being of all involved, particularly once the results are known. Over the years, several successful candidates have confided in me that their victory came at a significant personal cost."—ex-member, Insight IIT Bombay.

27% of respondents admitted to having said things they shouldn't have as compared to 45% of those running for positions. This is partly reflected in by a marked negative impact on friendship (and academics), with 83% of those politically

involved admitting the same. A significant 33% of respondents also admitted that they regretted their decision of getting involved politically, and surprisingly, this was independent of their reasons for getting involved politically.

It can thus be seen that more than 3 out of 4 students are affected negatively in terms of friendships or academics and a significant percentage regret their involvement. Notably, 60% of respondents also felt that people around them were becoming paranoid during elections. This goes to show



the level of frenziedness during election times at IITD, that one can only wonder about the impacts of this paranoia on the mental health of students.

## Concluding Statements

To conclude, it is vital that students are able to see the bigger picture and not get so tied up with campaigns that it begins to affect their friendships and mental health. The large

percentage of students whose friendships and academics were negatively affected because of their involvement in politics is symptomatic of a troubled election atmosphere

and efforts are needed from all stakeholders, from Deans to the heads of student bodies, to work towards policies that mitigate the extent of these impacts as far as possible.



# Impressions

## मानस भय-मिथ्या

"ध्वनियों की आहट से भय है  
कुछ करने की चाहत से भय है"

नीरव एकांत अंधेरे में  
एक चक्रव्यूह से डेरे में  
वो तकता है, वो तपता है,  
भय की अग्नि के घेरे में

२

डर स्वाभाविक है चातक का  
जब बूँदें स्वाति की ना साथ रही  
पर स्वर्णिम अतीत के आह्वान को  
अन्तर ध्वनियाँ है झाँक रही

४

भय है सब कुछ मिट जाने का  
भय है अनिष्ट घट जाने का  
ध्वनियों की आहट से भय है  
कुछ करने की चाहत से भय है

५

१

खुशबू पर भी वो शंकित है  
कांटों से भयभीत रहे  
जग को तो मधुरिम पुष्प लिए  
बस उपवन ही हैं दीख रहे

३

भय इससे है, भय उससे है  
भय मुझसे है, भय तुझसे है  
है भय खुद से भी तो  
भय सबसे है, भय कब से है?

६

ना कोई दर्द ना तृष्णा है  
ना चिंता ना मजबूरी है  
फिर क्यों खुशियों से भी भय  
क्यों अपनों से भी दूरी है



प्रकृति के अंचल से भय  
जीवन के पल- पल से भय  
दानव सा बृहद भयावह बन  
मानस हृदयस्तल में भय

७

मृत्यु के कारक सा ये भय  
इच्छा के विदारक सा ये भय  
आशाओं की हत्या करता  
नरभक्षी संहारक सा ये भय

स्वाभिमान निगलता ये भय  
मानुस को छलता ये भय  
एक क्षण में अंकुर बन उपजा  
अब प्रतिपल बढ़ता ये भय

९



भय प्रगति मार्ग का बाधक है  
असफलताओं का साधक है  
जो सशक्त हो इसके समक्ष खड़े  
भय उसका ही आराधक है

१०

सिंह के बाह्य कलेवर में  
ये भय गीदड़ सा छिपता है  
पहचानों, नोचो, फेंको तुम  
ये भय जो तुमसे लिपटा है

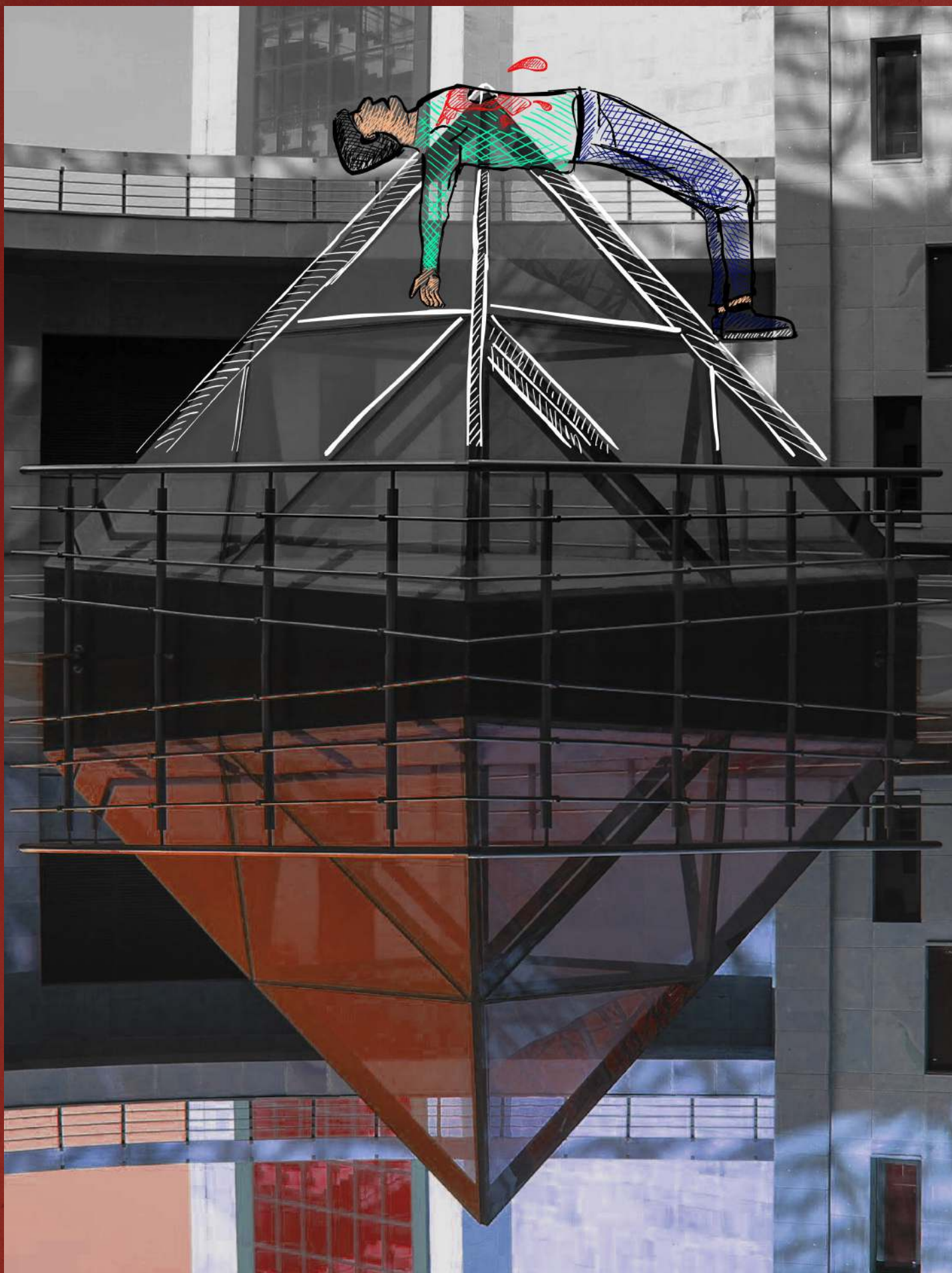
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टढ़ इच्छा शक्ति के संग खड़े हो  
इसका तुम प्रतिकार करो  
भय के आहार बनों ना तुम  
तुम इस भय का संहार करो

१२







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