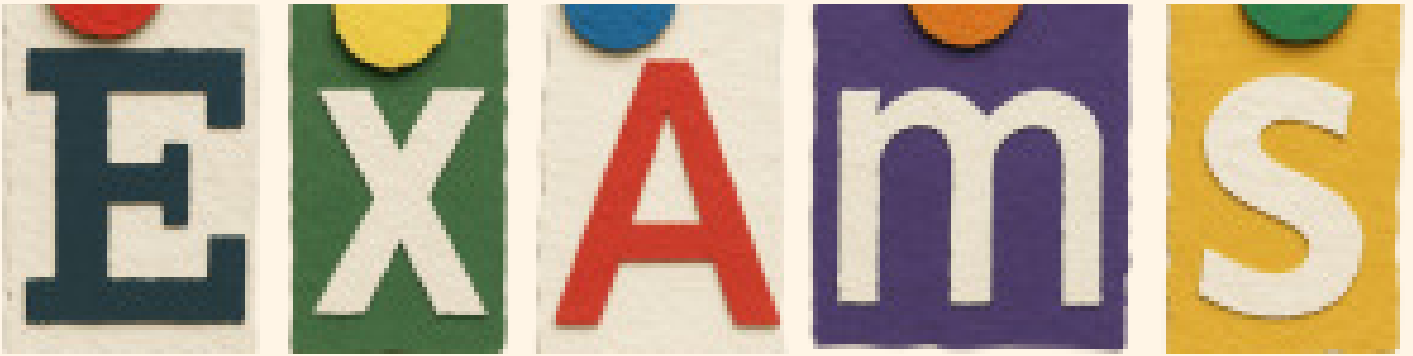


STRESS OF THE EXAM SEASON



EXAM STRESS

Time seemed to have slowed down. Every day would be full of excitement and anxiety as we waited for our exams to be over and us to move on to do whatever we wanted. However, reality would strike again - there was still time for our exams to end.

The days merged into one another. There would always be uncertainty about the next exam. We started staying up every night. Sleep felt like a reward, not a necessity. We memorized entire pages from textbooks. Revisions took forever. Still, it would feel as though we did not know enough. The need to complete our syllabus had taken a secondary place behind keeping up with the expectations. But finally, it ended.

The last set of answer sheets was submitted. An inexplicable weight was lifted off of our shoulders. The same classrooms which used to cause so much anxiety now seemed to laugh along with us. No matter who we talked to, it was no longer about chapters and marks. It was about what we would do post-exams, about taking care of ourselves and relaxing a little bit.

But relief is rarely by itself.

It was soon followed by questions - about how we performed in the exams, about joining the next class, about facing a new set of tests. The pressure had faded. It hadn't disappeared— it had only changed its form.

Looking back, the years feel like a collection of moments—the rush before, deadlines, the laughter during lessons, the support of friends during stressful days. These were the things that stayed long after the pages were turned, and the exams were done.

Maybe, in the end, it was never just about marks. Maybe it was about learning how to keep going even when everything feels overwhelming, about finding strength in ourselves and in each other.

Because we didn't just write exams.

We endured them— and somehow, we came out stronger.

Aditi Singh X-B

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A KINDNESS IN FORGETTING

The classroom hums in quiet grey,
chalk dust drifting like soft decay,
pages open, pale and still,
as if they wait to test my will.

Ink rests lightly in my hand,
but thoughts don't follow, don't quite
land—
they wander somewhere dim and far,
like distant, half-forgotten stars.

The clock speaks gently from the
wall,
not cruel, just steady in its call,
while something slips I cannot keep—
a fragile fact, a name, a leap.

Yet in the hush, there's something
kind,
a softer corner of the mind,
where losing things is not defeat,
just shadows shifting at my feet.

Outside, the sky prepares the light,
unbothered by this small, dark night,
as if to say, in silver tone,
no moment is the end alone.

So I let go of what I miss,
hold only calm, a quiet wish—
that what will come will still be mine,
in gentler ways, in better time.

And even if I falter here,
there's something future drawing
near,
not perfect, no—
but still enough,
still softly bright
beyond the rough.

Shambhavi Maurya XII B