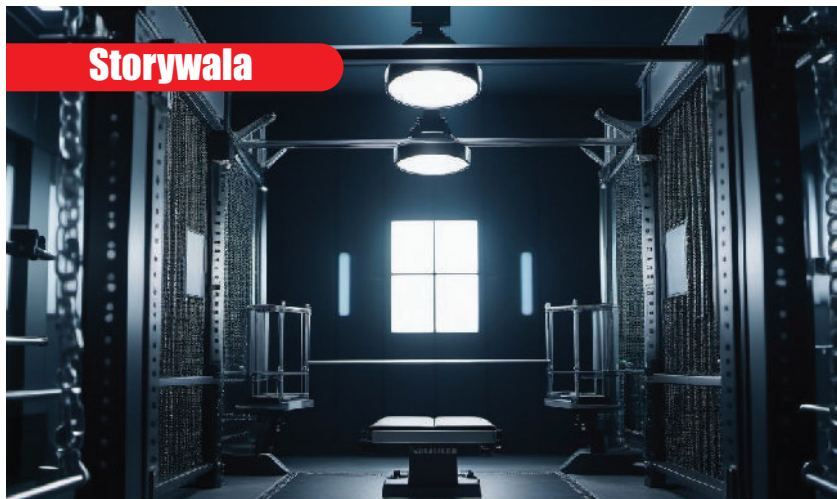


The annual cull



Storywala

Gauri Sharma

AGS Gurugram, XII

I stood among the members of the Special Troops. "Let's go," the captain stated. We nodded in response and marched ahead with determination towards Termination Unit 45. The culled were chosen based on the government's assigned criteria for weaknesses. Our task was to eliminate those individuals deemed unfit for our society, ensuring its purity and strength. I prepared myself for another day of carrying out the orders, in the cold and sterile execution cell. Such has been our situation since 2067, when the earth boomed with overpopulation, ousting the resources available. We, 'The

Cullers', became the enforcers. I looked at the list and frowned. "Only these many?" I asked a fellow enforcer. Moreover, they had no ailments. They were rebels, I think. He told me that physical weaknesses no longer mattered. We had eliminated the 'weak', leaving humanity with no differences. I shivered with a dreadful epiphany. The government's violent pursuits had stripped society of all its diversity and individuality, and I was one of the culprits too. I felt a sudden urge to challenge what had been thrust upon us and free ourselves to fly, breaking the shackles of enforced dogma. Adrenaline-driven, I walked up to the captain. I told him that our actions were wrong because it was against natural se-

Such has been our situation since 2067, when the earth boomed with overpopulation, ousting the resources available. We, 'The Cullers', became the enforcers.

lection. We had created a world of conformity, and it had weakened us. If we were to be hit by a plague, per se, we all would die because our genes were all so similar now. He looked at me as if I was a hysterical child talking gibberish. He dismissed my opinions because he felt it to be simply a dramatic response. My hands shook as I looked at the bloody walls. I didn't realise when the blood appeared. How could I have been so blind? This mass hypnosis had made legally sanctioned murders acceptable. The weak were never given a platform to speak and we continued to believe the powerful. My silence allowed the bloodshed to continue, staining not only the walls but also my conscience. I stared at my hands in horror as the hologram of the eliminations for today changed and the orders for tomorrow were passed. I looked at my watch to see tomorrow's list. As I scrolled down the list, I found my name. To be honest, I didn't feel fear. I felt guilt. The truth is, every story will glorify the hunter until the lion learns how to write, and the hunter will never learn the lion's language until it is preyed upon. 🇺🇦🇧🇪

WORDS VERSE

Footprints of memories

Yuvika Satija, AIS Gurugram 46, XI J

First-grader, wide-eyed and so small
A world of wonder, all ready to enthrall
Giggles and friendship's tender start
Learning all letters, what a brand-new art

Second grade where curious minds explore
Numbers, words, and many stories to adore
Exploring numbers, in a world that's vast
With crayons and pencils, creativity amassed

Now grade three, numbers take their place
Pencil scribbles, a new learning pace
Homework battles, fresh challenges arise
Yet laughter echoes in the schoolyard skies

Fourth grade, where we wonder deep
Science experiments and secrets to keep
Plants growing and stars twinkling in the sky
The thirst for knowledge flies super high

Fifth grade, a bridge to something new
Growing wiser, goals coming into view
Sports fields echo with cheers and victories
Sage life lessons learned through defeats

Now onto experiments, History's ancient tales
Math puzzles to solve, English's flowing trails
From playground chatter to deeper conversations
In grade six' embrace, figuring out aspirations

Grade seven unfolds with flipping new pages
Classrooms bustling like busy marketplaces
Geographical maps, filled with complexities
Yet within the chaos, we find simplicities

Explore activity clubs and hobbies abound
Debates, discussions, how new ideas found
Grade eight whispers of transitions yet to come
Ready for high school, new chapters hum

Grade nine, board exams' daunting first call
Papers piled up, determination stands tall
Stress creases young brow, nights blur to days
But courage shines through the exam's maze

Tenth-grade trials, board exams now near
Many hours of study, sweat, tears, and fear
Dreams of a career and choices to make
In the midnight oil, futures are all at stake

Eleventh grade, streams to choose and mould
Science, Commerce, Arts, futures yet untold
Leadership beckons, responsibilities arise
A chance to shine bright under ambitious skies

Twelfth, the final lap, bittersweet farewell
Memories of childhood, in tears they dwell
The words of wisdom, etched in every heart
Spread their wings to fly, ready for a new start.

Read Play and Win 67

Reading your favourite GT can fetch you a prize too. Complete all the boxes below. Click a picture and send it to editor@theglobaltimes.in or submit your responses by visiting The Global Times website (<http://theglobaltimes.in/readplaywin/>). Three lucky winners will win a prize every week!



Q.1 The retirement of ISS is in the year _____.	Q.2 How many teams are participating YP 2024-25?	Q.3 Who has been interviewed on page 3?
Q.4 Which mathematical principle has been mentioned on page 4?	Q.5 Who is the author of the poem 'Footprints of memories'?	Q.6 On which page can you find the movie review 'The Greatest Showman'?
Q.7 _____ has been named as the best city in the world.	Q.8 Which school celebrated tourism week from September 23-25?	Q.9 What is the cause chosen by the team of AIS MV for YP 2023-24?

Name:.....Class:.....School:.....

Results of Read Play & Win-66: **Naitik Anand**, AIS VKC Lko, VII A; **Anantshiv**, AIS Mayur Vihar, VIII B; **Aekas Vir Singh**, AIS Saket, II C

Illustration: Janhavi Gupta, AIS Gurugram 46, IX H

