

Mother India: A Critique

India as I see, by Yash Moitra

As I flip mindlessly through the shelves of news on my phone and adjust my glasses while watching politicians ramble about unity during a catastrophe, I ask myself, ‘Who lives if India dies?’; These five words penned once by our first prime minister remind me of a time when India fought an enemy together, in unity. The mere strings of text hover in my mind as today, my own India remains tangled in its battle against a mundane virus. Sitting at home all day was described to us as a ‘sacrifice’, as if we were some heroes saving the world. Our little sacrifice was going to save us all, right? As of now, it has been 122 days since the lockdown started; 122 days since 500-something cases. And free we are, as if we really did save the world. India is in Unlock, and we wade proudly through the waterlogged streets of our own nation, *free*; less than a month before we celebrate Independence Day. As a result of our sacrifice, we are now in a recession, our youth is jobless, and coronavirus has invaded through the plains and captured our capital; Checkmate, eh? You knew this was lose-lose, but we were going to come of lockdown healthy, remember? Remember that promise you took from the man behind the television, 8s o’ clock at night? Do you remember those words as you come out of a four-month sacrifice to see people going missing from hospitals and relatives crying outside funerals, where ambulances wait in line for their turn? *The economy will suffer to ensure the welfare of our people*, my teachers explained to me, in an ‘online’ class. Today, there is neither welfare, nor an economy, so to say. In front of me, there are two people in need of a ventilator- one is the economy and the other is welfare herself. And as I scream at the bearded doctor, he pushes the ventilator away, and watches as they both pass out. India is dying, so who’s going to live?
