Sharing Stories

World Harmony through Writing

SHARING STORIES

May 2021

+1700 WRITERS

Let's Empower Our Kids

INTERVIEWS

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EDITOR'S DESK

We are here and now, after an extended break. For the past few months, the situation has been difficult for each one of us. Our beautiful planet Earth is going through one of the most challenging times of Pandemic. Humanity is going through an upheaval and tedious moments. Sharing Stories at its core celebrates Humanity and we believe that these hard times shall too pass. The old normal with the new learning from the challenges faced shall manifest soon. Only thing is that we all need to stand tall and strong together during hold each other until the storm passes away.

For many of our writers, creativity has taken a backseat because of Covid-19 havoc. Writers are more often quite emotional and empathetic people. They cannot cut off the chords with the reality that is happening around them because a writer's words more often come out with real-life experiences. With so much pain and grief around, many of us struggled with our words. I am sure, slowly and calmly we all shall find the tip of our pens back very soon. We shall be able to spread light, awareness, knowledge, and strength with our writings.

We are back with our Sharing Stories magazine for you. As always, we tried to compile creativity, inspiration, and food for thought for our dedicated readers. Team Sharing Stories always tries to put in the best efforts to make your reading experience worthwhile and engaging. With your positive feedback, we feel motivated and encouraged.

From the next edition, we shall be trying to bring out some new additions and innovations to our magazine. We look forward to your suggestions, tips, and feedback in this regard. The primary goal of Sharing Stories is 'World harmony Through Writing' and we shall keep moving forward with this aim and motto.

Heartfelt prayers from Sharing Stories for everyone's safety and good health.

Happy reading and Blissful writing!



Piya Gajbe

Sharing Stories

ONGOING

@ INTERVIEWS

Shital Kakkar Mehra
Anooja Bashir
Vibha Batra
Atharva Deshpande

& PARTNERSHIPS

@Children's Book by Katha
@India Positive Citizen- NGO
@Book Review by Aakanksha Jain(www.bookscharming.com)
@Book Review by Inkerspress
@Unprompted by Mayaakatha

STAY

! LOVE FOR LITERATURE

Wordsmith Corner by Piya Gajbe
Did You Know by Chandrika

$ CONTESTS & GIVEAWAYS

Book Cover Contest Winners
Winning Entries March
Contest Prompt May

" FINDING SOLUTIONS

Neeta Gupta

" SHARING STORIES FAMILY

Naimisha Sanghavi- Featured Story

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#FINDING SOLUTIONS



Neeta Gupta

Neeta Gupta is a publisher and a literary consultant with a special emphasis on translations. Neeta is also the chief editor of Bhartiya Anuvad Parishad's quarterly journal on translation, 'Anuvad'. She has been working towards creating publishing connectivities across different languages and cultures. She has edited a volume of essays on translating from and into Indian languages titled, Translating Bharat, Reading India.

What do you think are the best features of self-publishing and how is it different from traditional publishing in terms of marketing a book? What are the key points that an author should keep in mind while submitting his/her manuscript to a publisher?

As far as book production goes, there is hardly any difference between self-publishing and traditional publishing except for the presence of an experienced editor at an established publishing house. In fact even self-publishing platforms offer the same services at a cost and it is perfectly possible to have a really world-class book in your hands through self-publishing channels, in terms of design, edits and production.

The difference shows up in the media response to the book in thereview spaces. A book that has been published and nurtured by an established publishing house, and has been in the hands of an exacting editor, will find better media coverage. The self-published author will have to deal with this truth.

No matter how well you manage your social media presence as a self-published author, that tag is hard to get rid of. People are always suspicious that your book probably did not make it past the traditional gatekeepers of the publishing industry, i.e., literary agents, senior editors, marketing teams, etc., and thus is lacking in some way.

The other more important thing to bear in mind is that self-published books are not eligible for most literary awards. This is a huge drawback as prizes do drive the market and make it easier for readers to discover your book. Entry criteria for the Booker prize state that "self-published books are not eligible where the author is the publisher or where a company has been specifically set up to publish that book", while the Bailey's women's prize for fiction stipulates that books must come from a "bona fide imprint". (Quoting The Guardian)
However as more and more authors are choosing to self-publish, literary prize administrators may have to change this attitude. There has been a recent spurt in awards for independent and self-published titles as well. I'm sharing some links here to help authors identify if their own titles fit the criteria or help them search for others that might be more interesting for their kind of book.

https://insights.bookbub.com/book-awards/

https://selfpublishingrelief.com/2019/01/10-best-awards-given-to-self-published-books-self-publishing-relief/

A good self-published book becomes like a calling card for an author. She can send these to editors and media personalities and this can lead to so many possibilities—good reviews, word of mouth publicity, increased social media shares, likes etc. Sometimes an unsolicited manuscript may just lie in a slush pile at a publisher's office, while a well-produced title, with a potential market, can make the cut and be picked up by an established publishing house.

Author Amish is a case in point. THE IMMORTALS OF MELUHA was initially self-published, yet it went on to make publishing history in the popular books segment by being picked up by Westland Books and selling millions of copies, both giving hope and giving rise to a number of copycat bestsellers.

With years of experience in the book industry, what are the changes you have noticed in recent 4-5 years due to rapid growth in technology?

Being a publisher in the Indian languages, I work very closely with other language publishers from across India.In April 2020, in the absence of maps on the way forward during the pandemic, we created a compass when we set up the Publisher's Exchange. We just brought together publishers from the North, South, East, North East and West of India onto one common platform to deal with issues of publishing and distribution in a post-Covid world.

The idea is to learn from one another and stay updated on global best practices. Our one-point agenda is to showcase Indian languages writing to the world.

The Publishers' Exchange brings together publishers, authors, editors, translators, graphic designers and service providers to work closely with the publishing industry, especially those working with Indian languages, including–but not limited to– Hindi, Marathi, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Odia, Assamese and Bengali.

For the past year we have been hosting conversations on different aspects of publishing, relevant to Indian language publishers. E-book platforms and audio book players came on our platform to help resolve issues that Language publishers were facing regarding fonts and cost of conversion to these formats. Delivery partners like Swiggy came in, for instance, to do a session on delivering books based on their very successful Kerala model which they set up at a time when book stores were not allowed to open in the state!

The Publishers' Exchange announced their first major internal rights sale recently when Mehta Publishers acquired Marathi rights for nine titles by renowned Tamil writer and one of India's leading literary voices, Perumal Murugan, from Kalachuvadu Publishing House. These nine titles will be directly translated from Tamil to Marathi.
Another major achievement for the Publishers' Exchange was their participation as a group in the digital edition of the Frankfurt Book Fair 2020. For so many of us, it was our first time at Frankfurt, albeit virtually.

Going forward, we are looking to put together an edgy India Writes/Rights Catalogue and build a corpus fund to support translation from Indian languages!

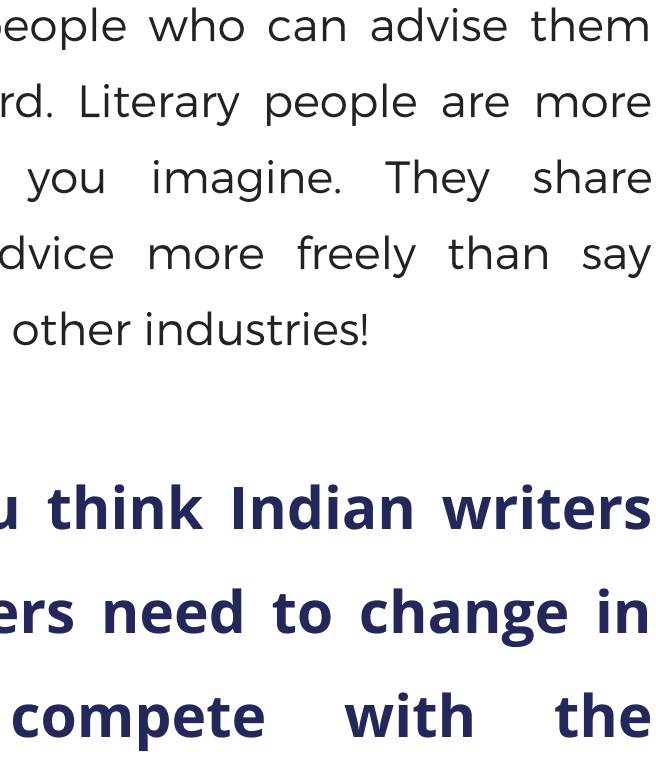
Sharing stories is a platform for budding writers and authors and we would like to receive some key points and tips for publishing, marketing and sales for a beginner from you.

Being a writer is a very lonely job. And the best stories come from a very quiet or very dark place within. Yet once you enter the fray and want to get your book published and share it with the world, you have to immediately wear several hats, including becoming a networker, a marketing genius, social media influencer, etc. One of the best ways to ensure that your written word finds a good publisher is by being represented by a literary agent of repute. They take on all these roles for a small fee and literally get you the best deals.

First-time writers can also simultaneously apply for emerging writers' grants and awards, as these go a long way in authenticating their work when the time comes to searching for a good publisher.

They should also stay in touch with the literary scene in their country / state / city / town and try and attend literary seminars and conferences, virtual or offline as circumstances permit. This is where they are likely to meet people who can advise them on a way forward. Literary people are more generous than you imagine. They share contacts and advice more freely than say business rivals in other industries!

What do you think Indian writers and publishers need to change in order to compete with the international publishing houses at a global level?





I think we need to take our translations very seriously. Both publishers, writers in the languages and translators from Indian languages should make sure that only the highest quality of translations make their way to the readers. A good translation has the power to change the way people view writing from India, while one bad translation is enough to take away years of hard work that writers and translators have been putting in.

Should an author stick to his/her style and genre or follow the market trend while conceptualizing a book?

I wouldn't say writers should give in to market trends, but what you write should be relevant to the readers; otherwise why will they buy your book?

Every writer has a unique place from which they view the world around them. Even siblings have completely different perspectives on the same events that may have touched each of their lives. So I would encourage writers to tell us their worldview, in their own unique style, and their preferred genre. The same story, say about a death in a family, can be told in so many different ways. It could be a book of poems on death; a children's book, where young readers come face to face with the ultimate reality; it could be a literary family saga, like Naipaul's A ***House for Mr. Biswas***; it could be murder mystery, a whodunit; it could be a thriller with a car chase thrown in; it could very well be an original film script for a film like Joji. Choose the style you're comfortable with, tell your own story.

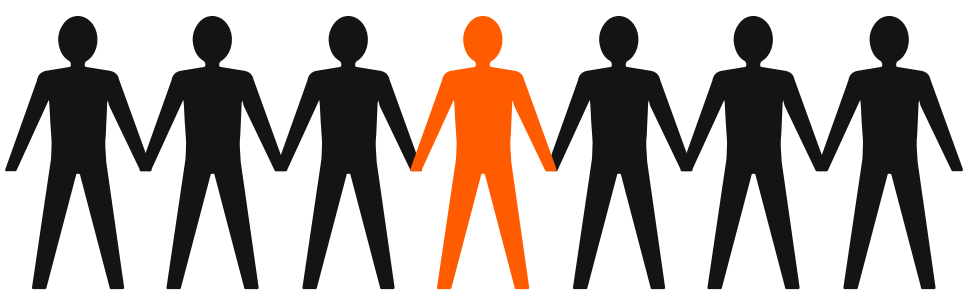
At Sharing Stories, we have an ongoing campaign 'Empowering Our Kids' where we are trying to encourage and inculcate reading habits from a young age. We are trying to pick up 20 to 30 must-read books for children and try to make them available at our library in Jaipur, also take this initiative across the globe. Please suggest some books which you think every child should read before the age of 15 (mostly the character-defining age).

The problem with my suggesting books for children nowadays is that I am close to sixty and the books we read as children are coming under the scanner for not being 'woke' enough or being problematic in some other sense. But I'm jotting down some names that younger readers in India may enjoy. These are books I have loved in no particular order:

- The Call of the Wild is an adventure novel by Jack London, published in 1903 and set in Yukon, Canada, during the 1890s Gold Rush, when strong sled dogs were in high demand. The central character of the novel is a dog named Buck. Also loved White Fang by the same author.
- Anne of Green Gables by L M Montgomery is the celebrated classic about a red-headed orphan and the family who falls in love with her. Also adapted for the screen on Netflix as Anne with an E. Simply brilliant.
- Astrid Lindgren's Pippi Longstocking is one of my favourite characters ever. Pippi is spunky and hilarious!
- Every book by Ruskin Bond

Books for young readers that I read as an adult, include:

- Every book by Neil Gaiman
- Arshia Sattar's Adventures with Hanuman
- Sampurna Chattarji's The Fried Frog and Other Funny Freaky Foodie Feisty Poems
- Anoushka Ravi Shankar's Moin the Monster
- Lalita Iyer's The boy who swallowed a nail
- hOle books by Duckbill
- Stories by Sudha Murthy and Paro Anand
- Namita Gokhale's Lost in Time: Ghatotkacha and the Game of Illusions
- Leila Seth's book on the Constitution of India for children



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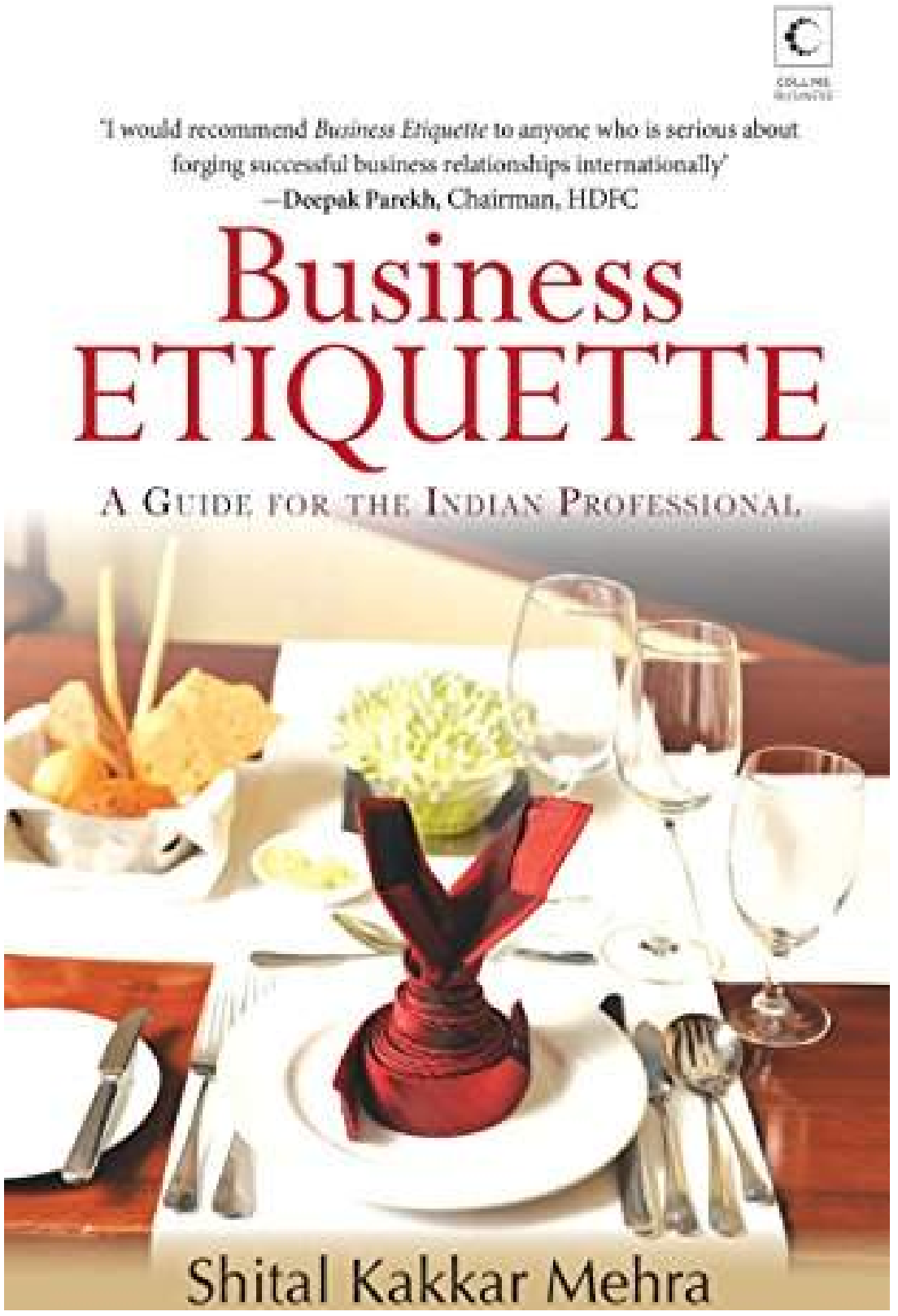
Shital Kakkar Mehra is India's leading Executive Presence Coach for CEOs. With over 20 years' of experience, Shital has personally trained over 45,000 professionals across Asia, including numerous CEO's from leading multi-national and progressive domestic companies. Shital is an acclaimed public speaker and best-selling author. She is an active philanthropist and is the Co-Founder of Katalyst, an NGO for underprivileged girls. Her second book, "Executive Presence: The POISE formula for Leadership" was published by HarperCollins India in July, 2020. The book has been declared a best-seller by Amazon, based on preorder numbers.
Read more about her: https://www.linkedin.com/in/shital-kakkar-mehra-0546a41/

Shital Kakkar Mehra

MAY 2021

Having trained hundreds of CEOs, more than 70,000 professionals in Asia, you are recognized as one of the best corporate trainers. So, how did the idea of writing books on these topics come to you?

As a speaker/ coach, I work with companies who invite me to train their professionals. However, several young professionals would write to me on social media or directly requesting for answers to their workplace-related queries. That's when I got the idea to write a book...A book can reach a much wider audience, can cut across borders and help many more young professionals / budding entrepreneurs upgrade their leadership skills and present the best version of themselves.



Your book, 'Business Etiquette: A Guide for the Indian Professional' ruled the bestsellers chart. Can you please share a bit about the background of this book?

The book was published in 2012 and has done exceedingly well. It is a must-have guide for all young professionals looking to start their corporate journey. In fact, it is a comprehensive guide that provide you the soft skills needed to transition smoothly from classroom to cubicle. The book has been translated into Marathi and Bengali. Also, it can be found in the libraries of Ivy League colleges in USA and Oxford / Cambridge, UK.

Tell us more about POISE and your book- 'POISE formula for Leadership'. How can this book help professionals perform their best and achieve more?

Indian professionals are extremely good intellectually, technically and work hard. However, they need to upgrade communication, ability to influence others, public-speaking skills and ability to engage with people. There was a gap...

Called the 'x' factor or the 'it' factor, Executive Presence is a leadership skill which will take you from the tubule to the corner office.

All books available on this subject were written by foreign authors who had not researched on our Indian workplaces. My two decades of coaching / speaking engagements offered me a unique insight into executive presence (both strengths and gaps) of the Indian professional. POISE is India's first research-based model on Executive Presence. The book has done exceedingly well and Amazon gave it a best-seller tag based on preorder numbers.

Interestingly, it has got excellent reviews from India professionals across the world- the world has become flat!

Both of your books are non-fiction and extensively researched. Would you ever like to try and write some fiction?

Although I am an avid reader of fiction, romance, mythology, wellness, psychology, I have not thought about fiction genre... Sounds interesting and I may try to write.

What are the 5 books which everyone should read? Who are your 3 favourite authors?

I have enjoyed reading all books written by Yuval Noah Harari and Malcolm Gladwell. Besides these two, I have enjoyed reading Chris Voss's book on hostage negotiation, 'Never Eat Alone' by Keith Ferrazi and 'Effective Executive' by Peter Drucker.

What would say is the most key component of success - Consistency, knowledge or strategy?

Executive Presence is about building high level of self-awareness and being authentic. Going forward, the world needs leaders (both business and political) who are collaborative, display empathy, respect for their colleagues/ environment and have executive maturity.

While knowledge is the foundation, being consistent is a requirement, I feel winners have great attitude and are able to display their ability to get the job done.

What are the challenges that you often face being a young and successful Executive Presence Coach? How do you keep aside the time for writing in your busy schedule?

As I work with CXOs and star performers, my work is both interesting and challenging. The challenge is to understand the individual, layer it with his/her organization culture and help them maximize their potential.

If you were to write a book about yourself, how would you name it?

'Coaching 1000 CXOs'



WHAT IF ROUND

What if you were given the power to change one thing from this world, what would you change?

There should be no poverty...everyone deserves clean water, food and access to healthcare.

What if you had all the money in this world, what would you do?

Donate it and bridge the gap between the rich and poor.

We would like to know about your philanthropistproject, ‘ Katalyst, an NGO for young women’.

Katalyst India (www.katalystindia.org), an NGO that supports economic empowerment of women and bridges the gender gap. Co-founded in 2008 with the intent of liberating women from low-income communities through the pursuit of professional education, Katalyst prepares young women for leadership roles, enhancing workplace diversity. We achieve this by supporting women in STEM through our proprietary 600-hours curriculum and a team of dedicated mentors from leading corporations. We are proud to share that we have impacted over 1200 women engineers and have been recognized internationally with awards from UK, USA, Australia and Asia.

Can you describe/outline your typical day? What entrepreneurial tricks have you discovered to keep you focused and productive in your day-to-day busy schedule?

I wake up early, go for a short walk, always eat a healthy breakfast and am at my desk by 9:30am. I have learnt to build focus, make extensive lists on things to be done and stay calm.

At Sharing Stories, we have an ongoing campaign ‘Empowering Our Kids’ where we are trying to encourage and inculcate reading habit from a young age. We are trying to pick up 20 to 30 must-read books for children and try and make them available at our library in Jaipur, also take this initiative across the globe. Please suggest some books which you think every child should read before the age of 15 (mostly the character-defining age).

As a child, I had to borrow books from a circulating library and loved reading Amar Chitra Katha, Enid Blyton and comics like Archie / MAD. Today, there many more authors and ways to read a book.
Parents should read to their children and inculcate the habit of reading / gifting books. Also, staying abreast with news is very important. Getting updates from social media sites cannot be the only way children gather information or learn.

What is that one message you would like to give to all the aspiring women entrepreneurs or professionals and budding writers?

Write something every day...it can be a thought, a comment on the current scenario, a view-point, etc. Get into the habit of writing and you will realize it is de-stressing. Slowly, you will get into the routine of writing an article, a short story and finally a book!

RAPID FIRE

Favorite...

Place: Mumbai

Food: Indian

Beverage: Water

Book: Life Without Limits by Nick Vujicic

Your First Love: Chilling with my close family

Your Other Talents: Gardening, catching up with family/ friends.

Favorite Quote: “Nothing and nobody is worth dying for”

Favorite character from a book-Alfred Newman, MAD magazine

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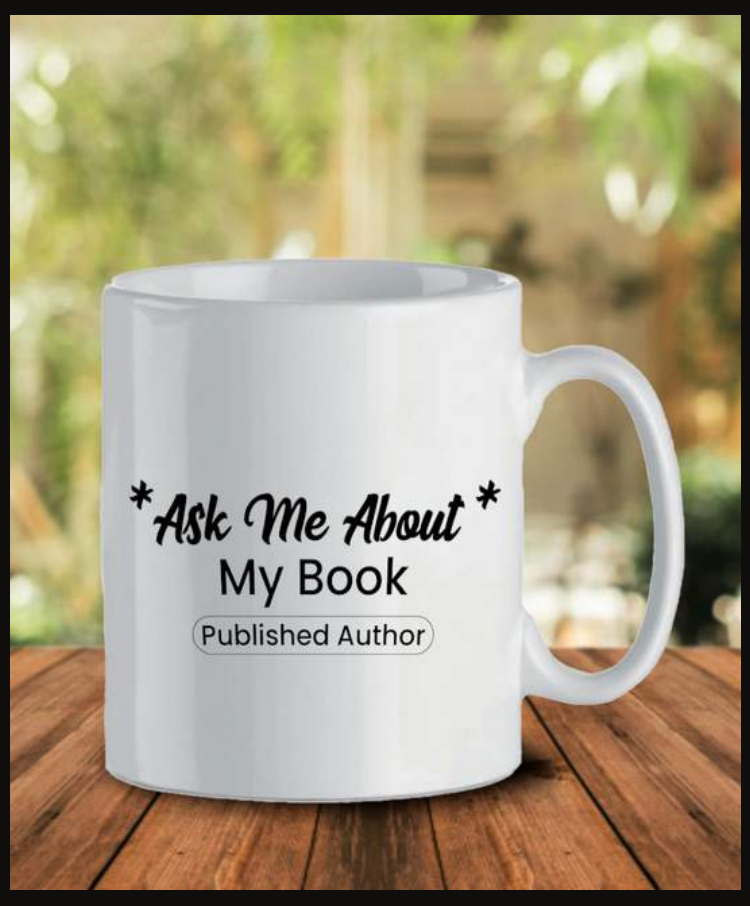
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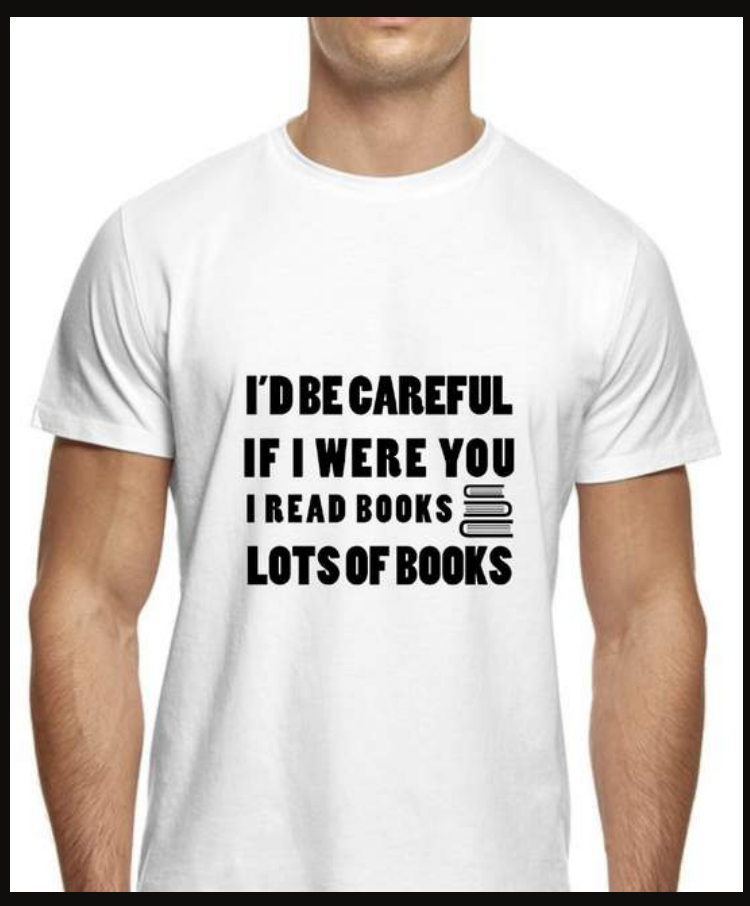




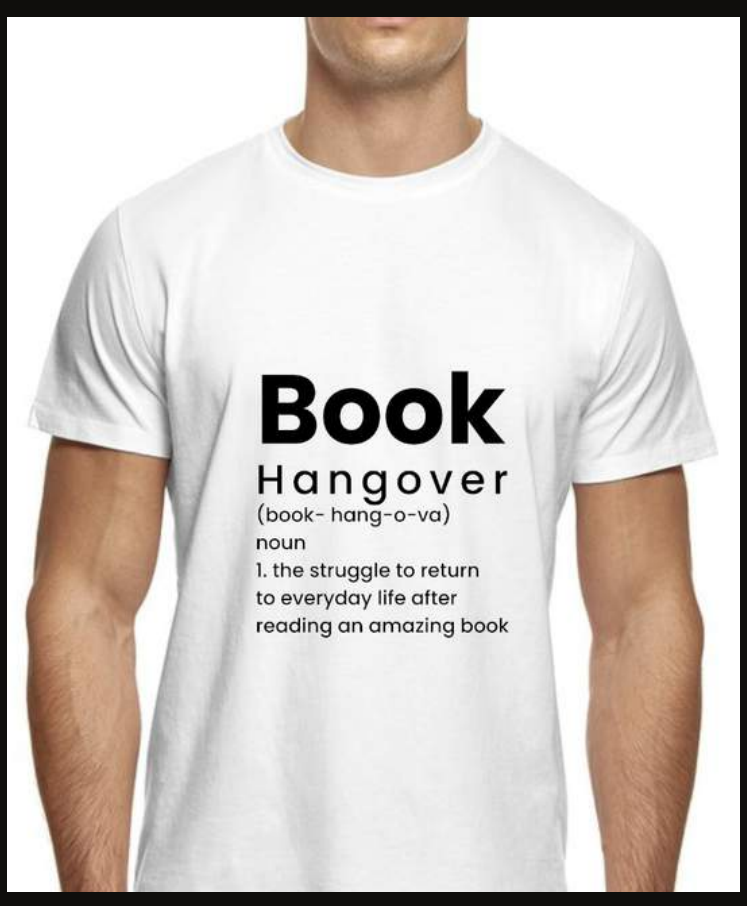












YOU ARE

valued
worthy
powerful
appreciated
special
enough

Sharing Stories

A CEO by profession, Anooja Bashir is a women empowerment enthusiast, Brand strategist, Marketing consultant, Business Coach and mentor for startups and SME's with a 20+ corporate experience in creating integrated, multi-channel marketing and customer experience strategies to elevate brand awareness, increase engagement, deliver exponential conversion and sales uplift, while improving customer satisfaction. Her performance and experience with academia and corporate marked the beginning of my venture OUREA. Today being the CEO of her successful venture, she has laid her hands on Information Technology with her strong IT Team along with Human resource management and corporate training. Currently, she is developing an ed-tech platform on an employability skill curriculum called LIKES. She is working on developing it to a mobile application which is in its last phase of development which has got featured in leading newspaper, online portals, and magazines.

Anooja Bashir

MAY 2021

Your journey has interesting twists and turns, from being an civil engineer in Dubai to becoming one of the most successful and young entrepreneurs. Why did you choose to be an entrepreneur, despite having a faced lot of hurdles?

I always wanted to create an innovative system that would be one of a kind. Since I handled different job profiles in my career and had acquired enough knowledge to bring out the best version of me, I just flowed along. It was Entrepreneurship that chose me as if I was born to evolve in this system of creating and innovating new wonders. I feel I never gave up because I knew deep down that it was my passion to develop a company with talents and skilled collaborating into a perfect system, to generate revenue for everyone associated with us.

After 10 years of corporate background and another couple of years in academia in 2014, I decided to bridge the gap of talents of academia and corporate, hence conferred the idea of an innovative Employment Skill Program mincing and distributing the quintessence of the corporate ask for the students, but the whole idea at the time of its inception was a long shot. Since it confronted and stood against the conventional flow of the hackneyed educational style and corrupted skill development, it harboured uncertainty and fostered widespread criticism.

Though the concept was of a finishing school which later evolved into a marketing agency and then with the expansion of the IT wing, she developed it into a 360-degree business management consultancy. Ourea emerged as one of the strong marketing agencies within a year with its innovative and conceptualised approach as I Collaborated with Vinod Chacko and Naman Modi and got the best IT support for Ourea. The professional team took a new shape getting us super stronger than ever as an organisation.



We also believe to contribute to society with our skills. It’s bliss to evolve into a 360-degree business management consultancy which brought me recognition, stability, and strength.

Tell us more about ‘Ourea’. Ourea means mountain in Greek and you practically followed system representing the seven primordial deities of Greek mythology: Nysa, Athena, Kithairon, Oreus, Olympus, Helicon, and Athos. Please tell us more about this whole idea.

Our company is a 360 degree corporate management consultancy which is into Marketing,IT,HR and training.We help companies to gain a foothold in the industry.Our vision is to become the strategic partner for organisations aiming to achieve excellence in all functions.

We give wings to their dreams by providing innovative solutions and helping the target audience to believe in our clients.We aim to exceed our clients' expectations through innovative and customised solutions that provide your brand with a marketing and corporate boost. Our 7 domains will work in tandem to achieve the business goals of our clients.

Being a 360 degree company is our unique feature and USP. We provide all business solution under one roof. We can easily solve issues as we have expertise in various fields with our team having knowledge and experience and skills in their respective field. Since we are acquainted with various clients our network provides a vast knowledge and information regarding the business, which in turn helps the organisation to think differently and come up with a pitch perfect concept. Our extensions of expertise and network helps us find solutions to any and every problem making us the perfect partners of any start-up or otherwise business.

As our tagline speaks we designs visions of our clients into reality .With our corporate consulting we provide one stop solution to all business needs.Our goal is to build to convert products into brands so that our customers who are into business have more visibility and lead generations.Since we have associated with company to provide marketing and needs,both can be blended perfect making the product /service of the customer stronger.Our digital solutions to IT hassles make our clients tension as we have a 24 * 7 tech support.In terms of providing best Human Resources we train the aspirants with proper etiquettes so that fit in corporate world. In Ourea academy we train leaders for the future to be the best CXO's in industry, which makes start-up to have a perfect road map of the industry rules.



Having failed twice in business and facing huge losses, what made you stick to your goal? What is the secret of your persistency?

Though I failed pathetically twice ,the fire in me to create something I loved and a question always haunted me that after being multi-talented I was facing constant set- backs.

Another aspect was affecting my own self-esteem and giving serious questions to my own individuality that Am I a failure? But my never-give-up attitude kept me going on. In the end, I attained all the P's in an entrepreneur s life - Passion, Perseverance, Personality, and Proactiveness. In a nutshell, I am a person who never gives up on my dreams and I know I need to be a role model to so many who believe I can provide hope to them one day, which I got myself proves through my persistency.

What are the 5 books which everyone should read? Who are your 3 favourite authors?

- JK Rowling- Cuckoo's calling
- Jane Austen -Pride and Prejudice
- How To Win Friends and Influence People. : Dale Carnegie.
- Fault in our stars- John Green
- Alchemist -Paulo Coelho

My three favorite authors are Paulo Coelho, Jane Austen, and Dale Carnegie

What would say is the most key component of success - Consistency, knowledge or strategy?

I would say the strategy is the key component to success. A person who can strategize would definitely possess knowledge as well as have a disciplined way of maintaining consistency. On contrary, a knowledgeable person may not succeed as he won't have a perfect strategy to achieve the goal. Again, being consistent without a well-defined goal can make anyone achieve success. So that's my theory and says on it.

What are the challenges that you often face being a young and successful woman entrepreneur? How difficult it is for a woman in today's era to carve a niche for herself?

The biggest challenge I face is to prove to people that I was capable of building my dreams. Initially, when I started my venture, I was criticized for my business model, the same which has bought me today success. I feel every founder has a scar that reminds them of their struggle even after achieving their goal. I literally struggled in finding a balance in managing the team and bring in sales to the system. I also had a lot of deceit from people whom I got associated in business as I truly trusted them and always had a belief that they had business ethics.

Besides, when I began my startup, I didn't have a mentor to guide me for which I myself had to do trial and errors to figure out what's the best strategy to make the company grow. Yet another challenge I face in running in business is to make the tough call that disappoints my own crew. For the sake of organization, I need to be strict at times, though I am personally so connected to my employees as I have to keep a lot of other perceptive in mind while making a decision.

If you were to write a book about yourself, how would you name it?

HOPE - That would be the title of my book,
-Hold On, Pain ends.
It's a storytelling narrative about anything that can be achieved if you have the passion and patience to achieve your goal. Soon my book will be in-market for those who believe in hope.

In the difficult times of Covid -19, what are the tips you would like to give to budding entrepreneurs to keep themselves motivated?

One of my tips for budding entrepreneurs would be to diversify their verticals and operations during the time of pandemic or during the lockdown. When the business market stays standstill, as aspiring entrepreneurs don't fret, lookout for opportunities, and expand your network.

Can you describe/outline your typical day? What entrepreneurial tricks have you discovered to keep you focused and productive in your day-to-day busy schedule?

RAPID FIRE

Favourite....

Place: NewYork

Food: Dragon Chicken

Beverage: Green Apple Mojito

Your Other Talents:
Contemporary dancer and Badminton Player

Favourite Quote: Never give up, No matter what, until you achieve your goals.

Favorite character from a book-
Hermione from Harry Potter

I only tend to procrastinate otherwise. I always make sure to eat breakfast, but even as I'm seated at the table, you can expect me to already be browsing through schedules of the day.

My day starts at the gym and then after having my morning breakfast with my family, my professional life begins. Once I am at the office I have a review with my secretary of the previous day's work and updates. I do have a brainstorming session with my partners regarding the operation process and a team meeting with each department according to schedules. I also find time to interact with my clients and attend webinars and conferences.

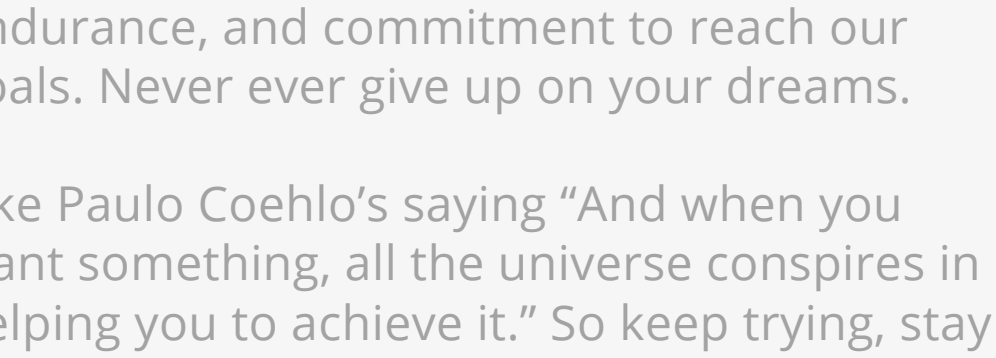
In the evening I spend time with my family having dinner and discuss that day with each other. I also enjoy Netflix series whenever I get the time and listen to music to release my stress.

What is that one message you would like to give to all the aspiring women entrepreneurs or professionals?

As budding entrepreneurs, never give up on your dreams and accept the fact that nothing is built in a day. We need a lot of perseverance, endurance, and commitment to reach our goals. Never ever give up on your dreams.

Like Paulo Coehlo's saying "And when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it." So keep trying, stay focused, increase your knowledge, strengthen your network, build a great team, and besides all believe in yourself and your dreams.

Also, failure is always going to be a part of your life, you'll keep failing and that becomes the major source of learning. Though it might seem to be a hard way, it is indeed the best way. Failure is the step towards success. So embrace your failures and learn from them.





WHAT IF ROUND

What if you had to live with only three things all your life, what would the three things be?
Books, Movies, and Food. I am assuming the tea is complimentary ;)
What if you were given the power to change one thing from this world, what would you change?
Why are you guys allowing only single digit options in your questions ;)
If I had to pick one thing, the set of 'gender roles' that have been passed on to women and men for generations now. It's the 21st century for heavens sake.
What if you had all the money in this world, what would you do?
At this point, market my book (haha - kidding). I am a believer in social enterprises. I would want to create an international network of small scale local businesses and ensure a viable selling model for these products. Ofcourse, the larger goal being to increase jobs, quality of life, and thereby pull lakhs of people above the poverty line.

4 WAYS TO TALK YOURSELF UP:

#1 Listen to what you're saying to yourself

#2 Challenge your self-talk. Is there evidence?

#3 Change your self-talk

#4 Make a list of positive things about yourself

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SAY IT WITH AN IDIOM

"THE LIGHTS ARE ON BUT NO-ONE'S HOME."

Meaning: The lights are on but nobody's home is an expression used to describe someone who is not very intelligent or who is considered stupid; it is also used in when someone does not react when spoken to, perhaps because they are focused on a task or are thinking about something else.

Source:www.idioms.online

Example of use: 1. "Once Dennis starts playing video games there is no use in talking to him. The lights are on but nobody's home."

2. "What is going on with John today? It's like the lights are on but nobody's home."

Origin -Used since at least the late 1980s.

When all the lights are on inside a house, we expect that house to be occupied. It is unusual for a house to be fully-lit when its occupants are out. This expression uses such an occurrence to describe a person who seems fully functional and animated but who is 'vacant,' or, in other words, unintelligent or unaware.

WORDSMITH'S CORNER

"NOXIOUS ('NÄK-SHƏS)"

Meaning: Noxious (adjective) often refers to something that's dangerous, harmful or destructive to living things.

Source: https: www.fluentu.com

Word Origin:
c. 1500, noxius, from Latin noxius "hurtful, injurious," from noxa "injury, hurt, damage entailing liability" (related to nocere "to hurt," and to nex "slaughter"

Example Of usage:
"You shouldn't be standing behind that bus and breathing in all those noxious fumes. It's bad for your health."

Sharing Stories | Humanity



This is now inspiring Indians from different parts of India and the world to make a difference. From gifting a meal to planting a sapling to mentoring a student there are millions of ways in which we can contribute. The new world we find ourselves in needs a new approach. The significant problems we face as a nation cannot be solved by the governments and civic bodies alone. Nation building is not a spectator sport. We need every citizen to pitch in. From a 10 year old child to a senior citizen – all can make a difference. The book offers ideas that inspire and delight while being actionable. It is dedicated to the Heroes of Galwan.

Sharing some excerpts from the India Positive Citizen book which provides a new perspective on what it means to be an Indian citizen:

Freedom is not free. Our brave soldiers guard it with their lives. So that we may live in security. From the icy glaciers of Siachen to the scorching deserts of Rajasthan to the tough terrain of Ladakh – our armed forces protect every inch of our borders every day for our safety.

As civilians, we often call a day 'normal' meaning uneventful. Millions of men and women across our armed forces, paramilitary, police and intelligence services work around the clock to ensure that the rest of us have 'normal' days.Normal days so that we can live with and love our family, pursue our dreams. For us to have normal days they give up their 'normal'.

Like us our soldiers too have families. They choose to live away for months and years to honor their commitment to India. Is a soldier more of a citizen than others?

India Positive Citizen

One action, once a week, every week.

Building a great nation one India Positive action at a time.

NGO Profiling

Do they have the sole burden of responsibilities towards the nation while other citizens have only rights? If the soldier stands at the border and protects the nation – we the civilians – can be the soldiers within – nurturing the nation with our actions.

It is not necessary that you do something different every week. But it is important that you make a positive and mindful contribution at least once a week. Pick one action and do that consistently every week. Diversity is not the name of the game - consistency is.

While our family nurtures us, we are equally nurtured by and indebted to millions of Indians who helped build our culture and the country. Every person who planted a tree, every teacher who instilled positive values to the craftsman and writer whose work reaches out through time and space and inspires us. We are indebted to the countless Indians who made it possible for us to live in a free country. The brave men and women of our armed forces who always protect us even at the cost of their precious lives.

From Raja Raja Chola to Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to Sardar Patel to our brave soldiers and Corona Warriors our present life and identity is shaped by so many.

We are at a unique phase in the history of our country and mankind, where we have the ability and the tools to make an impact. We are also at a stage where we must recognize and honour our gifts and responsibility to make a positive impact. It's no longer'nice' to do thing.

The challenges that we face cannot be addressed by few. Each one of us needs contribute. A simple example - Air Pollution killed 1.7 million Indians in 2019. Can we have clean air without citizen participation? Can we have a Bharat that is Swachh from Ladakh to Kanyakumari without active participation of citizens? Building immunity towards Covid is not just about taking supplements. We need to restore the equilibrium of the environment. For which everybody needs to participate with mindful action.

There are many inspiring examples to look up to - an 85 year-old water warrior to the mother of a martyr to a soldier who lost a limb to a grieving father who lost his young son. If these folks can be #IndiaPositiveCitizens, the rest of us have no excuse.

The impact of what we do in/for India will not be limited to within the borders of India. A strong, joyous, sustainable India will mean a more stable, peaceful world. A world which we can create with our consistent actions starting HERE and NOW.

Pledge to be an #IndiaPositiveCitizen.

www.indiapositivecitizen.com

MAY 2021

SAVITHA RAO



About the Founder:

Her career in international sales for an Italian JV company took her to 20 countries on work. An article on the North Pole melting moved her to do something directly in the space of sustainability. She started a range of eco friendly products while supporting employment for women and traditional artisans.

In 2012-13 Savitha started a campaign titled, 'India Kuch Kar.' with cleanliness as the theme. It was started to inspire the public to become active citizens. The initiative met with success. She was acknowledged by the Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi, in his #MannKiBaat. A meeting with him inspired the India Positive Citizen concept.

"If you want to inspire action, you have to lead by example", this illustrates her life and she regards her father as her role model.

A new world requires a new approach. Citizen participation is essential for addressing many of the problems we face as a nation and as mankind. Her goal is to invite every Indian to do one action, once a week, every week. Building a great nation one India Positive action at a time.

She has recently initiated Tulsi Shakti by India Positive Citizen – a unique , people powered approach to improving individual and public health by bringing the healing power of Tulsi to every home in India.

Vibha Batra is a Chennai based author, graphic novelist, advertising consultant, poet, lyricist, translator, playwright, travel writer and columnist.

She has published 17 books including The Secret Life of Debbie G (a graphic novel) Merry the Elephant's Rainy Day, Bathinda to Bangkok, The Reluctant Debutante, The Dream Merchants, Keeping it Real, Euro Trip, Ludhiana to London, Glitter and Gloss, The Activist and The Capitalist, Sweet Sixteen (Yeah, Right!), Seventeen and Done (you Done!), Eighteen and Wiser (Not Quite!), Family Crossword, A Twist of Lime, Tongue in Cheek, and Ishaavaasya Upanishad: Knowledge and Action.

VIBHA BATRA

“Sometimes, we do not get a chance to thank each one who has helped us in our Journey.” Let the readers get a chance to know about all the important people who have played a part in this Author Journey of yours.

Well, this gives me the opportunity to share my Thank You speech (the one I have been saving for the Oscars)! I’d like to thank my family, my publishers and editors, and all my readers for playing a stellar part in my writing journey. It wouldn’t have been possible (or as much fun) without their active support and encouragement.

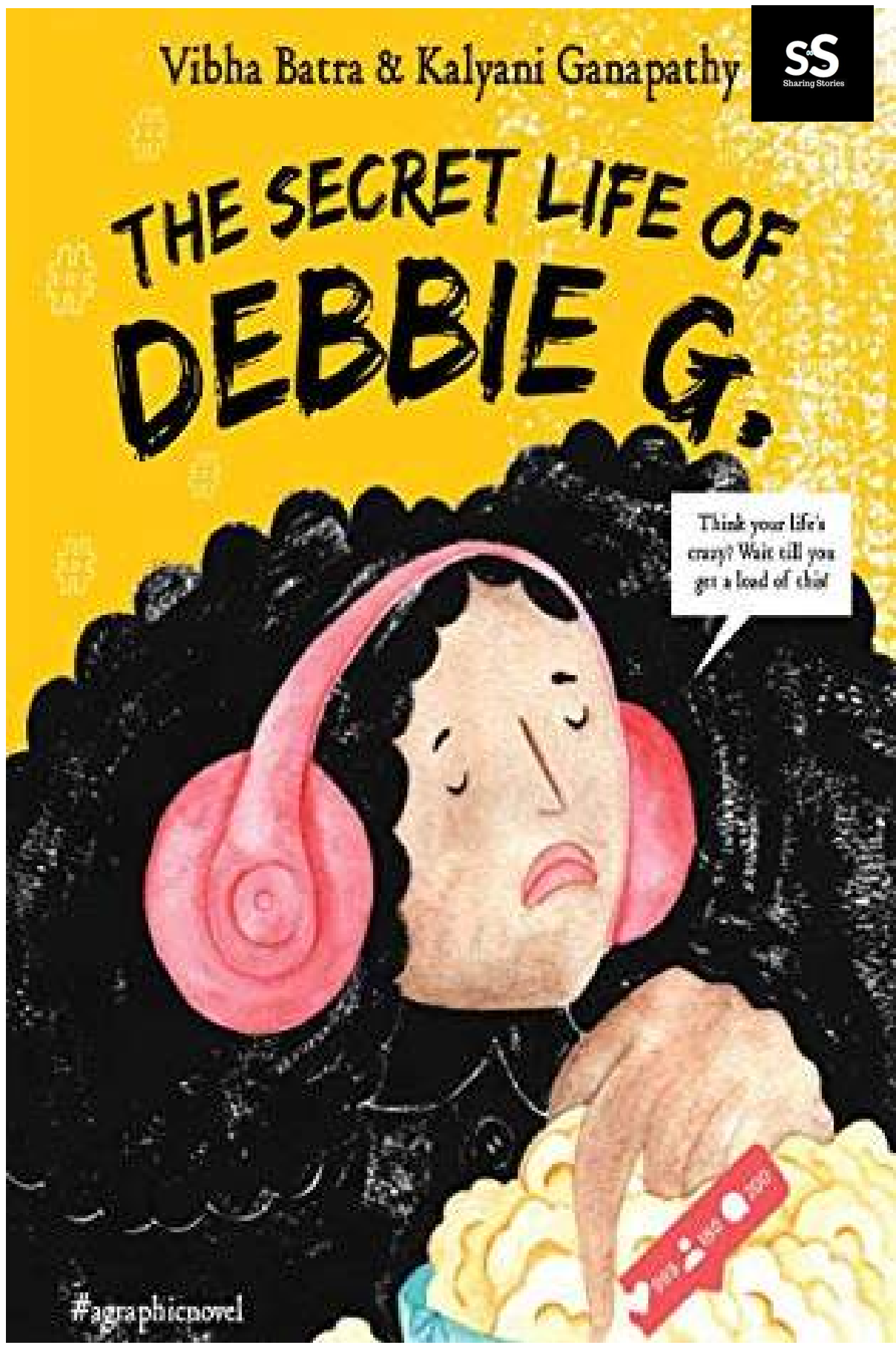
When and how did the idea of writing books come to you? Can you tell a bit about the books you have written and share a few lines from any of them?

Like everything in my life, I blame it on my genes. My maternal grandfather, the late Shri Vishnu Kant Shastri was an academic, Sanskrit scholar, and prolific writer. His memoirs, travelogues, and poetry are my all-time favourites. When he passed away, I decided to translate his book on the Ishaavaasya Upanishad into English. It was published by Rupa. And voila, I went from copywriter to author.

I have published 17 books including The Secret Life of Debbie G (graphic novel) Merry the Elephant’s Rainy Day (picture book), Bathinda to Bangkok, The Reluctant Debutante, The Dream Merchants, Keeping it Real, Euro Trip, Ludhiana to London, Glitter and Gloss, The Activist and The Capitalist, Sweet Sixteen (Yeah, Right!), Seventeen and Done (you Done!), Eighteen and Wiser (Not Quite!), Family Crossword (short stories), A Twist of Lime (short stories), Tongue in Cheek (poetry), and Ishaavaasya Upanishad: Knowledge and Action (translation).

A few lines from my books:

Bathinda to Bangkok: Kitty and opportunity don’t come every day.
Sweet Sixteen: Most people get homesick. I am sick of home.



Your debut graphic novel ‘The Secret Life of Debbie G’ is garnering rave reviews and was the only graphic novel which made to Harper Collins Children’s Festival List 2020. How was the whole experience of writing a graphic novel as it was a new format for you too?

It was a terrific experience. So, it all started when my editor asked me if I’d write a graphic novel for young adults. I replied, ‘Yes! Of course! Right away!’ with all the confidence of someone who’s never written a graphic novel before. And then, I dived headlong into the world of comic books and graphic novels. All in the name of ‘research’, of course.

Are you working on anything at the present you would like to share with your readers about?

Yes, am working on my next book. Am always writing (in my head). But it's way too early to share. Watch this space!

According to you which are the 5 books everyone should read and also who are your top 3 Authors?

Just five? How about 17? (that is, all my books).

Some of my favourite authors:

- Sukumar Ray
- Ruskin Bond
- JK Rowling

Tell us a bit about your family, likes and dislikes as a person. How do you schedule your time for writing?

So, a typical day is a mad whirl of obsessing over the colour/consistency/frequency of poop (the baby's, that is), battling hunger pangs (my own), apportioning blame for everything (the hubby), writing furiously (only in my head), assuring account executives at the ad agency ("Am sending the copy any minute now"), gaping at celebs on Instagram ("Will scroll for five minutes, just five minutes"). To answer the question: no fixed hours. I write furiously in my head and transfer it to the laptop ASAP.

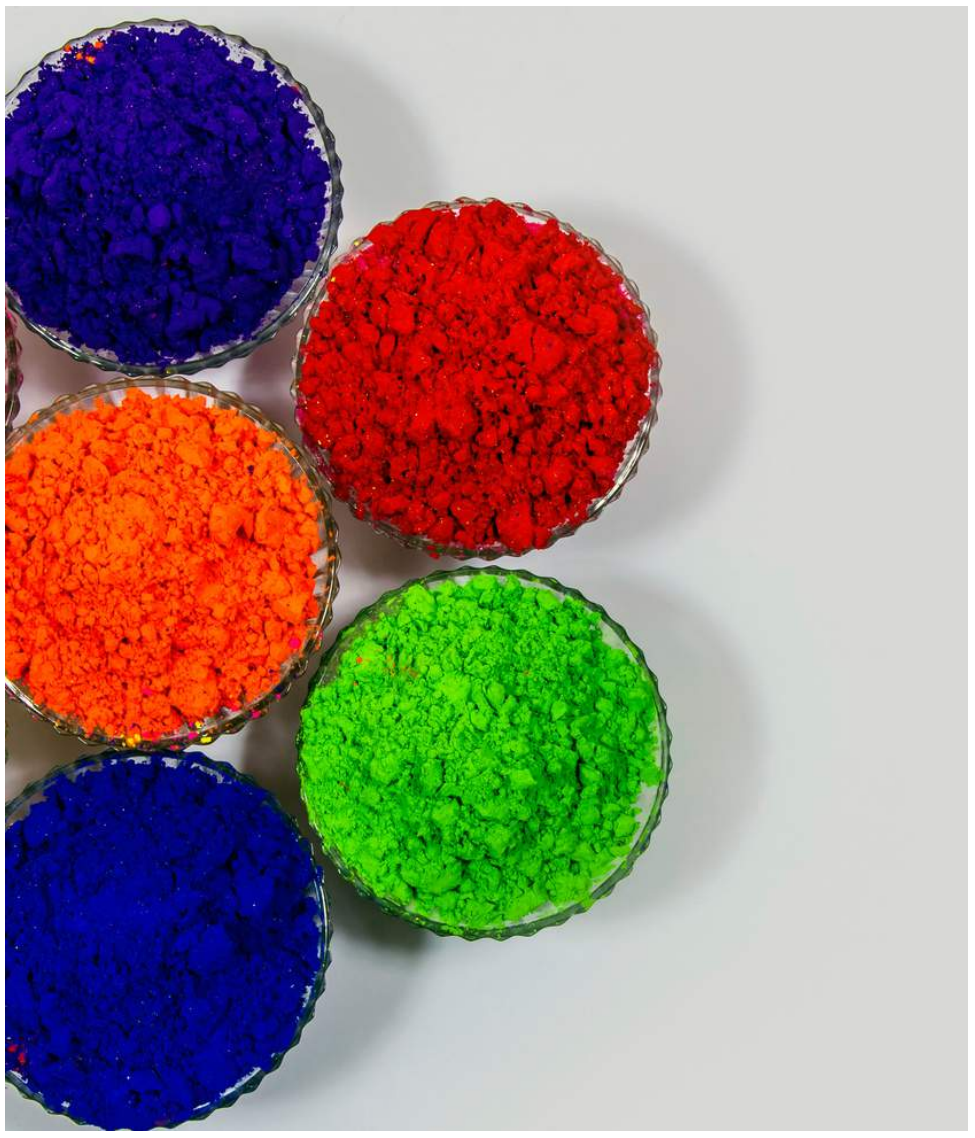
You are a novelist, poet, travel writer, lyricists, translator and much more. What is your favorite genre and style?

Okay, here's a confession: I'm a compulsive writer. I've got to write. I can't not write. From prose to verse, novels to travelogues, short stories to graphic novels, plays to lyrics, I love writing them all. Please don't ask me choose, I couldn't possibly if I tried.



At Sharing Stories, we have an ongoing campaign 'Empowering Our Kids' where we are trying to encourage and inculcate reading habit from a young age. We are trying to pick up 20 to 30 must read books for children and try and make them available at our library in Jaipur, also take this initiative across the globe. Please suggest some books which you think every child should read before the age of 15 (mostly the character defining age).

Vibha: Sounds like a wonderful initiative! Here you go:
Harry Potter (all the books in the series)
AbolTabol
HJBRL: A Nonsense Story
Diary of a Wimpy Kid
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
The Room on the Roof
The Night Train at Deolali
Matilda



RAPID FIRE

Favourite....
Place: : In front of a screen
Person: Me, Myself, I
Food: Does dessert count?
Beverage: More
Your other Talents: Writing isn't enough?
First Love: Food
Favourite Quote: Impossible to pick one
Favorite character from a book- Same as above

WHAT IF ROUND

What if you had to live with only three things all your life, what would the three things be?
Cell phone, Wifi, Mobile Data (you did say "things").

What if you were given the power to change one thing from this world, what would you change?
All the politicians.

What if you had all the money in this world, what would you do ?
I'd go back to working on my book.



TWEEN – TOWN

BY NAIMISHA SANGHAVI

A glitzy corporate event, it was award time at ANZ, the most popular media firm.
The compere soon announced “and the award for best CSR outreach program goes to, Nikhil Sharma.”
Standing with a mike in one hand and his award in the other, and the past just flashed in front of Nikhil’s eyes.

FLASHBACK...

“Nikhil, Nikhil, come and see the water drainage beta” I heard Shivaji kaka shouting from under my house.
I closed my book and got up from my study table. My mom was in the kitchen, of course she had heard Shivaji kaka too. I looked at her with an expression of “can’t study mom, got to go and help him”, the return expression I got was “I know you were finding ways to drop studying and run”.
“Nikhil beta, come fast the water is leaking out”, Shivaji kaka shouted once more.

I looked at mom and asked, “Can I just go and come back? Quickly of course” I added.
“Hmm” and a stern nod was her response.

Shivaji kaka, was a widower in his early 70’s, with no children around, now preoccupied by household chores.
“Yes kaka, what happened?” I asked as soon as I reached his house. “I think the drainage pipe is choked.” I got an anxious explanation. “Kaka, do you have a pump and a metal or wooden rod?” I asked. “Oh yes” saying he went looking for it. He soon came back, “here”, he said and handed me a balen (small wooden rod) and a water pump.

Push-pull, push-pull, I tried several times but with little success. “Kaka, I think it will be better if we can get a plumber to do this” I said after several failed attempts. “I know one guy, mom might have his phone number too, don’t worry, Kaka, I will get this fixed.” saying I ran upstairs.

“Mom do you have that plumber’s phone number? The drainage pipe is badly choked” I asked hurriedly. “It is there in the dairy.” said mom.

“I don’t know when you will get to your studies at this rate. Every day you get distracted by something or someone and the board exams are just around the corner.” Look at Ravi (my elder brother) see how hard he is working for his engineering entrance. “I will get back to studies immediately, mom, as soon as I fix the problem for Shivaji kaka. He is so old, Ma. He needs help, just a few minutes.”
After trying for several times, finally I got through to the plumber. “Kaka, I spoke to the plumber, he will be here shortly.” I assured kaka.
“Thank you, beta.” I waited with him for several more minutes till the plumber came. Then they both got busy so I ran back up to my house to study.
“Is the water issue sorted?” asked my brother who was sitting at the study table we shared.
“Oh yes, the plumber will fix it.” “Good” he said smiling at me and then looked down back to his books.
“Nikhil, now don’t go anywhere, focus on your studies, exams are around the corner and mummy gets worried for you.” said Ravi without lifting his head from his books.
“*Bhai, maths ka yek problem tha, wo*...”

“We will sit together after dinner, show me where you are stuck, will sort it. OK?” said Ravi patting my shoulder.

I started to read, but my mind was elsewhere. “Why can’t I be like Ravi?” I thought. He is so focused on his studies, has been a ranker throughout. My teachers at school still remember him. He has won so many prizes for the school, teachers and principal were proud of him. Every time mom came to school they would enquire about Ravi.

Ravi was a nice brother, quiet but helpful. He had very few friends. He would help me with my studies, helps mom too, he could actually cook!

Why can’t I be like Ravi? Would mom love me more and worry less for me if I were like him? We were just so not alike. He was reserved, quite, self-sufficient and focused on achieving his goals and me on the other hand, the wandering bird, waiting to be with people.

“Nikhil, are you back?” I heard mom shout for me, “Yes Ma” I said and dragged my mind back to the books.

Just after a few hours... There was a knock on the door...
“Aunty, Nikhil ko bejona khelne, uske bina maja nahi aata”, said a bunch of my friends standing at the door. While they were requesting my mom, their eyes were searching for me.
“Exam ke bad, abhi jao” said my. *“Please aunty, request, humara stump bhi tut gaya hai, Nikhil koi idea dega”* said Chotu the youngest member of our cricket team.

“Ok, one hour in the evening, now go.” said mom.
She looked at me, raising her eyebrows, telling me to focus on studies “Hmm... I have told your friends you will go to play, but only if you finish your portion for the day.” she said.

“Yes mom”, I promptly sat upright. “Oh ho, when will these exams get over?” I thought glaring at my books. There were four more papers to go. These exams were almost a month long.
That evening at the dinner table, “Hmm, delicious, I am blessed to have a wife who cooks so well.” said my Dad smiling.
Just then, the doorbell rings.
Dad opens the door, *“Aare Anita,”* Anita, a young woman in her late twenties, hands over a plate of vegetable patty, *“Bhaiya, ye dena tha.”* Looking at mom, “Didi, it’s your recipe.” she then turned to me, “Thanks a lot, Nikhil.”
“It’s ok Didi, hope Aryan is feeling better.” I enquired. “Much better.” She said
Dad handed over the plate and looked at me, *“Yeh thank you kyu?”*
“Dad, baby Aryan aaj bimar tha, to main Anu didi ke liya medicines and vegetable laya.”
My mom asked *“Kab?”*
“In the evening, we heard Aryan crying loudly, Didi was trying her best to calm him. When I asked Didi what happened she said, Aryan had a stomach bug, she had to get his medicine but there was no one at home and she was also late to cook dinner. She sounded stressed. So I volunteered to fetch her medicines and vegetables.” I said shrugging my shoulders.

“So you didn’t play? You went vegetable shopping? Why didn’t you tell me?Oh Nikhil” sighed mom.

The exam centre was far away from our home, so my mom would accompany me every day.

Outside of the exam center was a mela (get- together) of children who tried to study last minute and Moms and Dads who had come to drop them.

Usually a set of mothers would a pick a corner and gossip, often expressing dissatisfaction regarding the preparation level of their child. It didn't matter if you didn't know the other mom, topic of their children, their approach to studies and general exams rules bonded them together.

Finally, today was the last day of the exam. My friend and I happened to be closer to the group where my mom was standing, close enough for me to hear their conversation.

"Sunita, you have an elder son too right? What is he doing?" An aunty next to my mom asked her.
"Oh, he is preparing for his engineering entrance exams" said mom. "He is very clear of where he wants to go" she volunteered more information with pride in her voice.
"And what does your younger son want to pursue?" asked aunty. "I don't know what Nikhil is planning to take up, he has not made up his mind as of yet." she answered pensively. "Oh you must be worried for his future" said aunty.

Oh no! I thought.

My mom looked at her surprised, "Ya, while Ravi is he is quiet and shy but good with books, Nikhil on the other hand is doesn't like studies as much but is outgoing and a people's person."
"I do want Nikhil to focus on his studies so that he does well for himself." said mom. Both Nikhil and Ravi are different, they both complement each other. I would not want any of my children to change", she said smiling.
She continued, "You know what, each member in a family contributes different things. My husband contributes through his hard work and money that sustains us. With care and affection I keep the family bonded together. Ravi brings us pride and joy through his achievements, but Nikhil, he brings us the blessings of everyone."

"Nikhil is a helpful child, everyone loves him." She continued to say with a smile on her face. "He will never face a lack of friends and well-wishers, and in the long run that is what matters."

Listening to her brought a smile to my face that reached my eyes.
That day I learnt, I was not better or worse, I was the happiest child that day because I was ME!

About Naimisha :-

From an economics and business graduate to a upcoming writer, Naimisha's journey started with developing and writing course material for academic world. The urge to always have some creativity and sensitivity that nudges the mind and heart if children was top of mind for her when she wrote any lessons or books for children.

It is also the reason she actually has a SensorianEdutech FB page! The "Art to Heart" series are bunch of fun activities for children during pandemic times, something that triggers their imagination and involves their families. Writing for several years, k-5 is herfavourite space and usually write for young children.

'Tween Town' is her first attempt at writing for tweens to teens...these stories are actually her observation of young boys and girls around and a sneak peek into their world. A world that is full of hope and energy. These are not meant to preach or teach...they are her reflections of their world, their STORIES that she would love to SHARE!



Naimisha Sanghavi

MAYAAKATHA

Where Stories Dance



Mayothsava,
It's all about celeberating and Team Mayaakatha, where Stories Dance, a tiny bubble in Storytelling world, celebrated its first anniversary between April 01st and April 05th 2021.

An event partnered with Sharing Stories, Pratham books,
ArtoonsInn, Beyond the Box, House of Books and Tales,
KAHAANI BOX - Library,
Kiran Tirupati and Turning Point Library.

Stories are way to connect and Team Mayaakatha organised the event by connecting the stories and Storytellers to the audience with the series of events. The show was inaugurated by Geeta Ramanujam, Founder Director and Storyteller- Kathalaya's International Academy of Storytelling.

And they had Master Storytellers like Deepa Kiran, Vithya Dhanraj, Jyoti Pande, Geetanjali Shetty Kaul, Priya Muthukumar, Rinti Sen, Shiraz Saini, Tony Cranston, Alvin Raja, Harishikaa Udasi, Srividya Veeraraghavan amf Lavanya Prasad, sharing wonderful stories in genres like Healing/ Dance/ Music/ Happiness, Mindfulness/ Horror and loads more.

Along with the Adult Storytellers, they had the little battalion of Storytellers by the League of Little Legends, Shanaya Singh and Shrija Karthik. They just stole the show with their beautiful, naughty and cute stories.

Mayaakatha is planning more.

Yes, loads more in their kitty, they had Poetry connect for the April month, mixed bag of stories for May and now they would be featuring Healing stories as a part of #365daysofStorytellinginMayaakatha for the June 2021.

Maybe you wish to heal the world through your stories, write to them at storieswithmayaakatha@gmail.com



Team Mayaakatha, Where Stories Dance











MAY 2021

#LETSMAKESTORIESDINO

#100wordsquills #ButterflyDance



About Sowmya

Studied Computer Graphics at Pondicherry University prior to embarking on a career in illustration and Animation

Current Research Project:

Turning 1330 Thirukural couplets into 1330 Paintings in 1330 Days.

And this Illustration is part of the same project.

MAY 2021

#LETSMAKESTORIESDINO

#100wordsquills #ButterflyDance



HYPOCRISY

I peeped out of my Innova. "Hey! You!"
The woman stopped. Of ebony complexion, her slender neck was adorned with a necklace made of seashells. She flashed her pearly teeth at me. I winced.
"Where's the guest house?"
She pointed her finger to her right. Ah, there it was! I rolled the windowpanes up. Was I hallucinating? Or she had an aura around her, creating the impression of a halo?
I shook my head. I went back to reading the WhatsApp forward regarding George Floyd.
The comment I was about to type - #BLM - suddenly sounded hollow to my privileged ears.

NARAYANI V MANAPADAM

WHO IS SHE?

When you turned fiercer than the sun,
You are Kannagi, burning down the empire of Madurai
When you nurtured Rajendra Cholan,
You are Kundhavai, mentor of Raja Raja Cholan
When you excelled in martial arts,
You are Velu Nachiyar, recovering your lost kingdom
When you built numerous temples,
You are Sembian Mahadevi, the powerful queen of queens
When you were a devoted wife,
You are Vasuki, wife of Thiruvalluvar

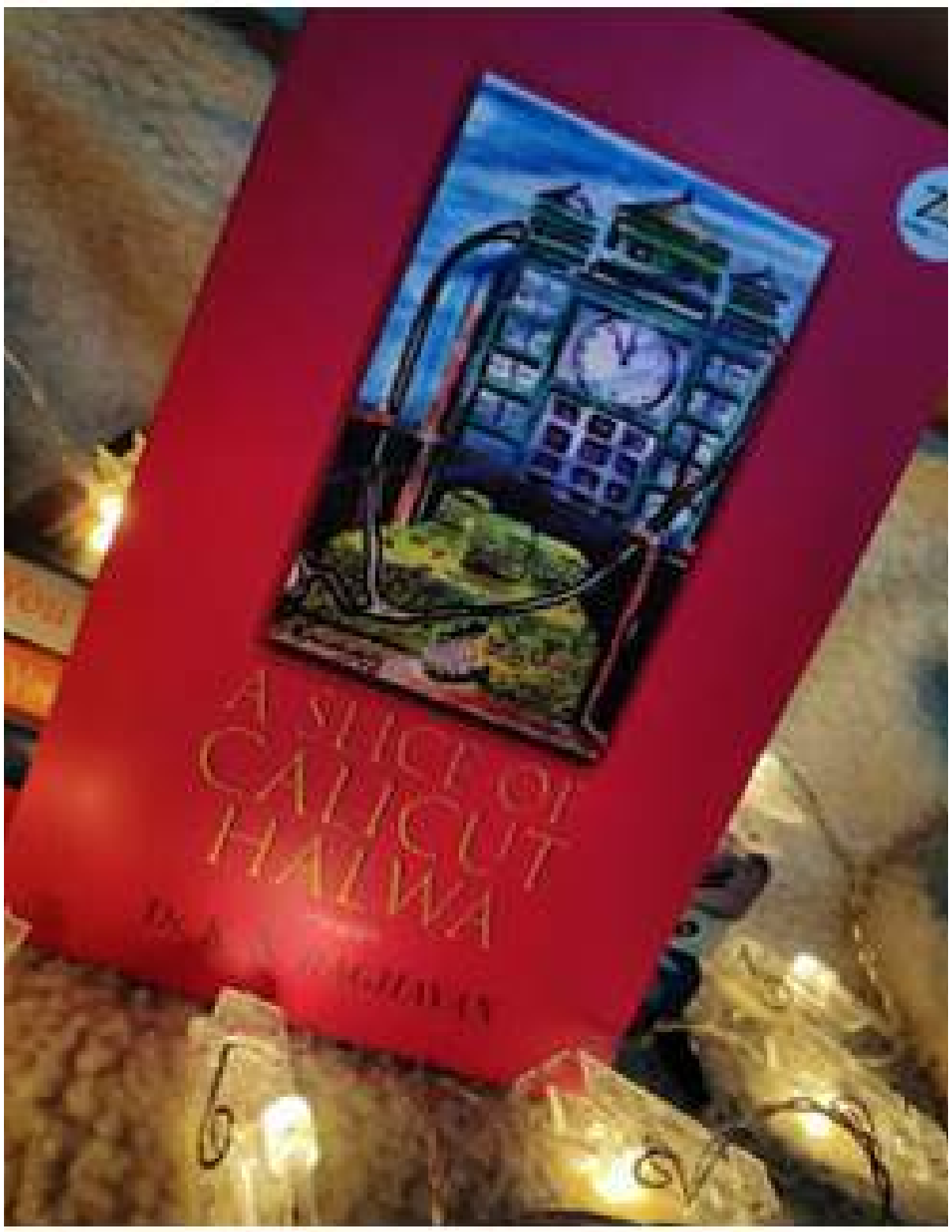
It is always, You!
The true beauty beneath the dark skin,
The valiant armour that won the battles,
The intriguing muse to the ancient poets,
The revealing incarnation inside every woman.

RAMYA V



BOOK REVIEW BY AAKANKSHA JAIN (WWW.BOOKSCHARMING.COM)

Women play the role of daughter, sister, mother, wife, daughter-in-law, and even Goddess. But our society treats them as weak and sensitive. One who can't make her own decisions or capable enough to manage her finances even after marriage; is a standard thought process of most men. People dominate women from a younger age; we have seen how parents treat a boy and a girl differently. The liberty of playing outside and talking to boys is curtailed when adolescence begins. Girls are forced to do household chores when their brothers can do whatever pleases them.





NAME: A SLICE OF CALICUT HALWA
AUTHOR: DR. K. N. RAGHAVAN
GENRE: FICTION
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
PUBLISHED BY: ZORBA BOOKS
PUBLISHING YEAR: 2019
ISBN: 978-81-944234-0-9
PAGES: 203
RATING: 4 OUT OF 5 STARS

Sharing Stories

A Slice of Calicut Halwa is such a story of a girl named Reema. Due to her dark complexion, she soon realizes that there is only one way to make her family proud; by studying hard. She excels in her studies but soon becomes the prey of a goon named Desmond Lopez. He is a law student and constantly harasses Reema in public. The repeated abuse breaks her spirit, but with her friend Jyoti and her mother, Devi, she gets some help and can move on.

She gets admission to medical college and soon gets married to Praveen. Like every girl, she has dreams, but they all smashed when she got to know Praveen's authenticity. She bears the physical abuse and name-calling. Her only way to get rid of those situations is to gain financial independence.

She becomes a known surgeon, but her life gets more miserable. The past comes back to haunt her, this time with more intensity. When no one comes to her rescue, she decides to take the matter into her hands for the first time. Will she be able to get rid of Desmond? Will she ever be able to find love in her life?

Dr. K. N. Raghavan has written an artistic story portraying homosexuality and physical abuse endured by women. We live in the 21st century. Still, the women don’t get the respect and the importance they deserve. When Reema's mother and elder brother Rajesh learned about Desmond's repugnant deeds, they blame Reema by saying that she invokes him.

Reema's husband never bothers to pay attention to her wishes. He always pretends to be an ideal spouse in front of others. No woman should give a man another chance; if he abuses her. No matter what society says because those people will never understand the trauma a victim goes through. From a younger age, the mother told her daughters to obey her husband's and in-laws' wishes, that she has to please them, and make sacrifices. She has to bear all the responsibility of marriage.

If a husband beats you, it is your fault. If a man has an affair, it is because you are unable to satisfy him. This is the reality of Indian society. People always find faults in women. No one dares to speak about the brutal ways of men, not even their mothers.



Praveen's mother had some doubts about his son's sexuality, but she never talked to him; instead, she finds a girl to marry him. Another dark side of people's personalities.

This story is phenomenal. Being a woman, I can relate to Reema's character; her struggle, pain, and losses will undoubtedly touch the reader's heart. I appreciate the author's efforts to write a women-centric story representing the agony and sacrifices she made. I relish reading this book, but I recommend it to grown-up readers only due to the explicit content.

Blurb

The year is 1985. A brilliant young girl, full of promise, has just begun classes at her local college. Rema is excited about this new phase in her life, when all hell breaks loose. She begins to be harassed by a young man from the law college, during the bus journeys from home to college and back. Her confidence is shattered, her sense of self destroyed. Although things take a turn for the better when she makes a new friend in college, her troubles are far from over.

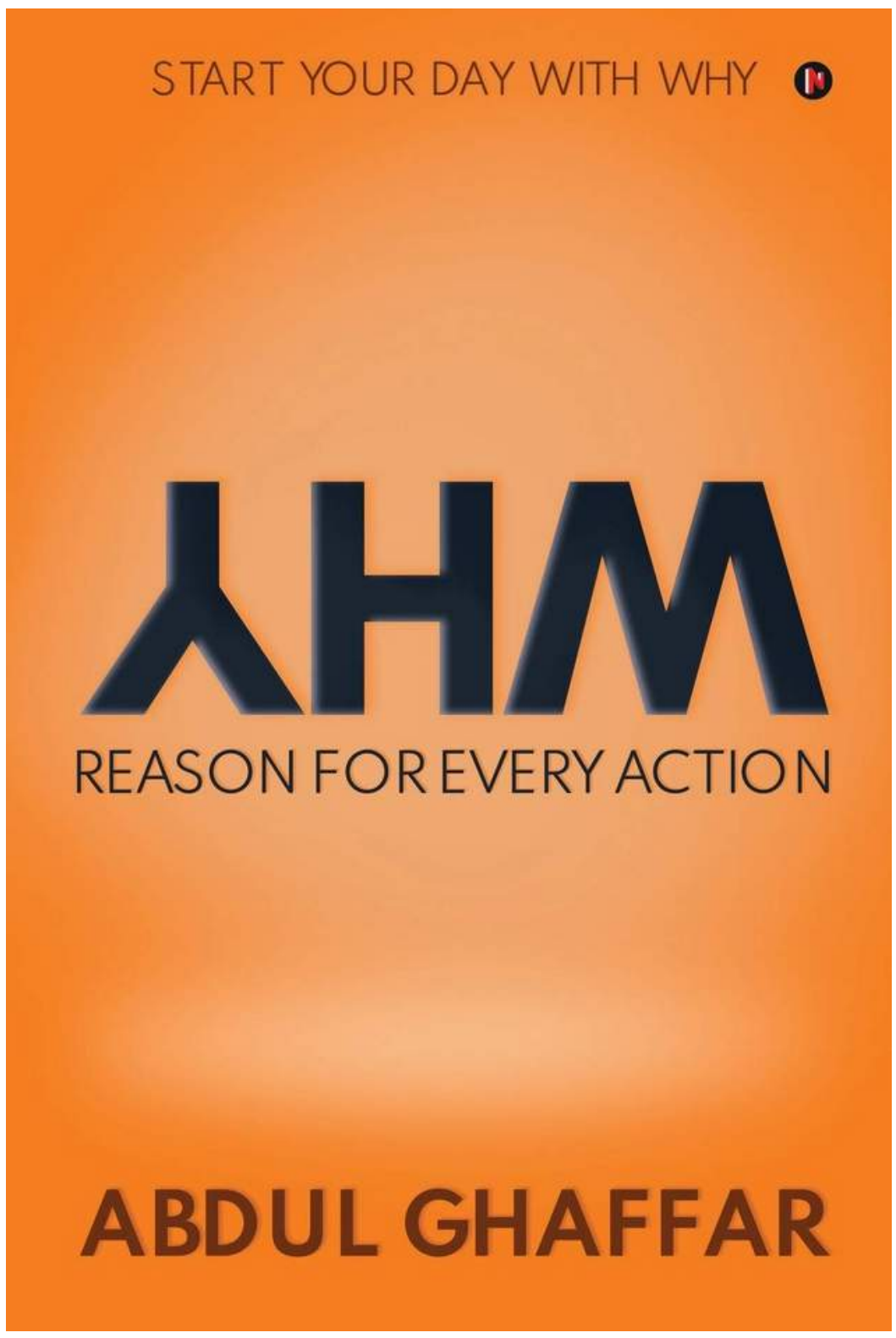
Eventually, she gets married to a young lawyer but her marriage is a trap from which there is no escape. To make matters worse, one day the man who abused her when she was in college re-enters her life. He leaves no chance to subject her to further abuse and violence. Rema is at a loss about how to deal with this impossible situation. What will Reema do? How will she turn the situation around? How will she face the demon who has taken it upon himself to take away everything she holds dear? This is the moving and uplifting story of a woman who refuses to let the hostile conditions of her life bring her down. She fights through everything to emerge stronger and better. Unfortunately, she has to take extreme measures to fight her abuser. This is an important commentary on women's place in contemporary Indian society and the conditions of their existence. Rema's story brings with it a slice of life in Calicut, a city located in north Kerala.

Originally published at - **https://www.bookscharming.com/2020/03/book-review-a-slice-of-calicut-halwa-by-dr-k-n-raghavan.html**

BOOK REVIEW BY ATRAYEE BHATTACHARYA (INKERSPRESS)

If an action has an equal and opposite reaction, this book, 'Why-Reason For Every Action' is a crisp and concise work to emphasize how every action of ours must be backed by a reason. The WHY behind what we do is much more significant in bringing out a fruitful outcome. Lucid language and a very practical outlook towards the regular affairs of life are what make this book a good read. Comprising of 8 chapters, it redefines our purpose towards life. Neither restricted to a particular age group nor any specific social stratum, this book can add fuel to your desires and push you closer to success. The author, Abdul Ghaffar captures the attention right from his preface notes- Desires do not work out by themselves. One must work towards fulfilling their desires and most significantly through a justification. Every action needs to be propelled by reasons to achieve the desired and decided outcome.

The book starts with a wonderful quote by Mark Twain- The two most important days in your life are, the day you are born and the day you find out why were you born. Human life is significant, and the only thing everyone will remember about you is the WHY behind your actions. As we proceed, the book offers us the reasons behind every great man's actions; right from Socrates to Mahatma Gandhi to Steve Jobs. It analyses the basic WWH pattern of the human psychological system; the What-Why-How pattern. The best part is, nothing has been written without any scientific evidence and the magnitude of WHY is enhanced by leafing out several stories from the pages of World History.



NAME: WHY- REASON FOR EVERY ACTION
AUTHOR: ABDUL GHAFFAR
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
PUBLISHED BY: NOTION PRESS
AMAZON LINK: HTTPS://WWW.AMAZON.IN/DP/163633573X
RATING: 4.5 OUT OF 5 STARS

The second chapter is curiously elaborated towards what is this Why. Right from the origin of the word to its impact on our brains. A thorough analysis of different types of Whys' is done. For us, Why means just an interrogation; ever heard of an informative why or a consecutive why or a supportive why? If we say life is governed by our values, this book teaches us a legitimate value of Why. If we say motivation is moving together for mutual benefit, then the author has done a great piece of work to motivate everyone out there. Complicated behavioural aspects are described with real-life success stories. What else a self-help book reader can ever ask for?

If you ever feel the concept of motivation is a hyped-up topic, scroll through this book and you will be served with all the benefits a simple motivation can bestow upon you. Be it the clarity of goal or killing the fear factor, the author chalks out everything. He elaborates on how visualization can be converted to realization and also thickens the line between motivation and manipulation. As you turn the pages, you realize that what matters the most is WHY, be it at the individual level or at the organization level. WHY triggers our action towards the ultimate success. The inner fire to excel burns in the WHYs and keeps us going till the destination.

Eloquent yet compact, pragmatic and remedial and overall a good read. A slight hitch comes with some editing errors, otherwise a useful piece of work.

Blurb

WHY – Reason for every Action (2020) deals with your WHY, i.e., the reason for your each and every action whether it is good or bad. This explains the purpose in your life. It shows you the reason for taking the pain every morning to get up from the bed to go to work, which you do every day even without your motivation and enjoyment.

This book will gradually navigate you to get rid of procrastination and develop an interest in your routine task. The purpose of the book is to keep you in action and to help you to get your desired results. As you go through this book, the secret of WHY will be revealed and you will find the answers to the questions you face in your day to day life: Why do you lose your enthusiasm in your office, in the school or in the society? Why are your motivations vanishing gradually? How is your why important to maintain your motivation? How does your why play a pivotal role to help in regaining your lost motivation? How can your lost motivation be regained? And you will come to know how much it is important to find the reason for your every action.

About the Author

Abdul Ghaffar is an academics by nature and business expert by profession, holds three master's degrees in Public Administration, M.B.A., and language and literature. He is an entrepreneur, corporate trainer, and motivational speaker. He has been awarded Gold Medal in Public Administration and also many accolades in his professional career. His writing skills in poetry and educational necessity demonstrate his academic fondness in education. He taught Business Management at Arab Open University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. "WHY – Reason of an Action (2020)" is his first book on motivation. His masterly expertise in finance, sourcing, education, marketing, and social psychology amply reflects in the book. He is currently working in the Healthcare Skills Training Institute of GE Healthcare, Saudi Arabia.

He is President of International Board of Social and Education Trust, a social and educational organization and members of many social and educational organization. He has also associated with schools in India as well as International Indian schools in Saudi Arabia.







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LET'S BE AWARE

We can fight this virus together

LEARN THE SYMPTOMS AND GET TESTED TODAY IF YOU ARE FACING THE SAME!

WEAR YOUR MASK AND STAY HOME

Atharva Deshpande was born in Nagpur and raised in Wardha, except for the time when he moved to Pune and attended university there. He studied electronics & telecommunication at the college of engineering Pune. His debut novel Begin Again is a character study of Anirudh via poetry and stories. When he's not writing, he can be found wandering through nature or journaling at a coffee shop. He is also an actor, engineer, scriptwriter, team lead, and meme entrepreneur.

Instagram - atharva_deshpande Email - atheyrockinindia@gmail.com

Atharva Deshpande

“Sometimes, we do not get a chance to thank each one who has helped us in our Journey.” Let the readers get a chance to know about all the important people who have played a part in this Author Journey of yours.

This one is for each and every woman who came into my life as grandmother , mother , sister , friend or just a mere acquaintance.

If I shine today I bask in their light.

Also a special thanks to the one who has inspired this book , won’t name her , I am sure she is in a happy and sunny space of life , just truckloads of gratitude towards her .

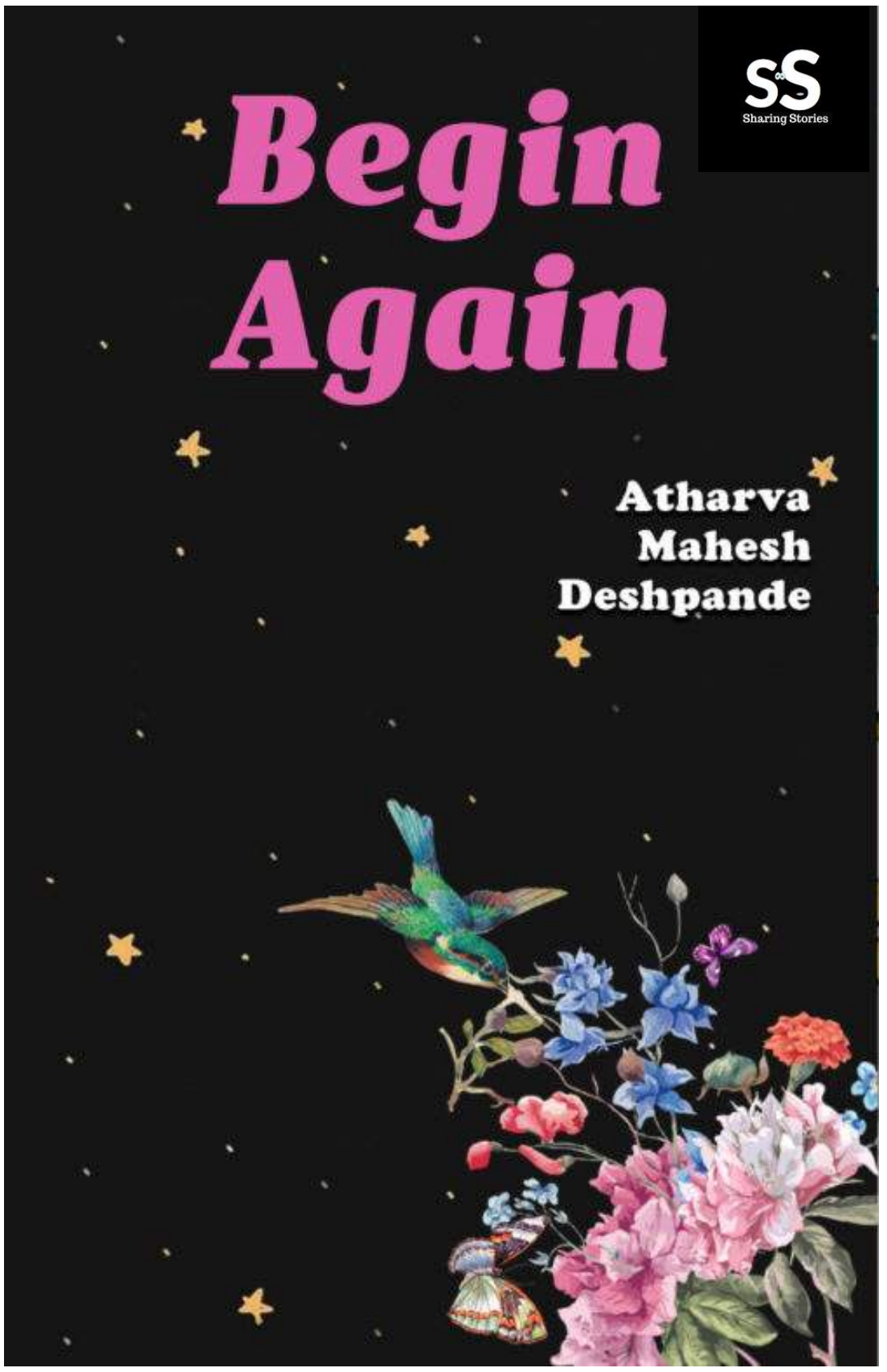
When and how did the idea of writing books come to you? Can you tell a bit about your book ‘Begin Again’?

Idea of "Begin Again" came to me while I was quarantined and alone at my farm when Covid first hit .The axiom ,“Solitude is creativities womb” came true to me .

"Begin Again" is a compilation of all the poetries I have written in last 5 years but the uniqueness of "Begin Again" lies in the fact that , I have also shown a sneak peak of story that has inspired those poems . It’s a story of Annirudh ,Shaurya and Mihika and how they grow in life via love .

‘Begin Again’ is a creative endeavour that completed during your quarantine period in a farm house. Please share the experience and the emotions you went through while working on this book?

The thought first came to me while I was reading Main tenu phir milangi by Amrita Pritam , and I had sleepless nights thinking about what inspired that cult poem , for 14 days while I was quarantined & alone I had conversations with Amrita Pritam , lunch with Sahir Ludhiyanvi and breakfast with Imroz ,I feel that creation comes when you find out that something is missing in a given art form and that’s the window to newness , so I took a pen and a diary and created this character study of Annirudh and the story behind his poetry .



Are you working on anything at the present you would like to share with your readers about?

Right now I feel empty , I feel that I have given everything I had for Ibtida , and I want to begin again with my thought process and thinking , so I am looking for a metamorphosis . I am on a journey to gain new experience, hear new stories , meet new people , watch films , read , travel. Having said that I can feel a dark crime mystery idea lurking in my mind as I talk to you .

According to you which are the 5 books everyone should read and also who are your top 3 Authors?

On the road by Jack Kerouac
The god of small things by Arundhati Roy
Factotum by Charles Bukowski
Rasidi ticket by Amrita PritamCats cradle by Kurt Vonnegut .

Fav authors Charles Bukowski ,Haruki Murakami , Miranda July .

Tell us a bit about your family, likes and dislikes as a person. How do you schedule your time for writing?

My family is from a small town called Wardha . It's a place where two of the coolest folks from India , Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave had spent most of their life spans.

My father Dr Mahesh Deshpande is a lecturer he recently completed his PhD in rural marketing and mother Swati Deshpande is administrative officer at LIC also an M.B.A , both of them have always had inclination towards Literature and Art . So art is in my DNA.

Writing is like meditation to me, I try to write a poetry a day . Someone told me that it keeps the fascists away .

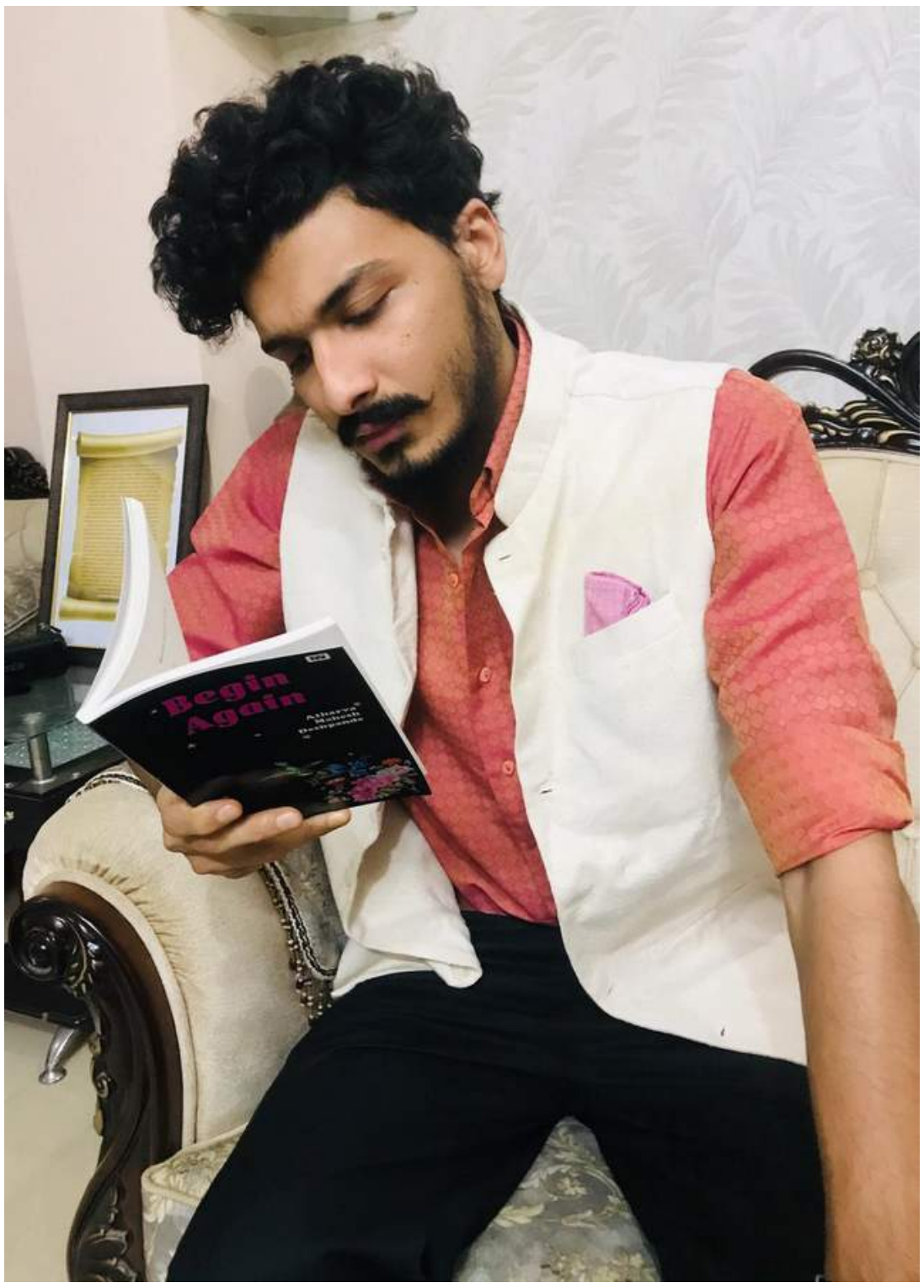
Could you share few tips for Young Authors?

For all the young authors my only advice is to just keep writing , not because you will achieve something from it , only as you are in love with the process of writing, and there is nothing else you can do before message from your brain, down through your arms,into your fingers are gathered on that page.

And writing will bless you with things that you never expected.

How was your experience of publishing your first book? What are the key factors of book promotion and marketing that you picked up in the process?

I feel that the reaction to the book has been exceptional till now, "Begin Again" has been in best sellers list for a really long time , we have sold over 2000 copies . And I feel the reason behind it is my Instagram family, It's very important to understand who you write for as a debut writer. I feel social media is a key for modern day bestseller .



Photography Credits- Charudutta Kale

RAPID FIRE

Favourite....

Place: Kashmir

Person: Somebody I seek to be.

Food: Dal chawal and onions

Beverage: Cold coffee

Your Other Talents: Acting , Making memes

First Love: My mom

Favourite Quote: "The Man Who Says He Can and the One Who Says he Can't Are Both Right " -Confucius

"Run to the rescue with love, and peace will follow." -River Phoenix

Favorite character from a book-

Holden Caulfield in Cather of the rye

At Sharing Stories, we have an ongoing campaign 'Empowering Our Kids' where we are trying to encourage and inculcate reading habit from a young age. We are trying to pick up 20 to 30 must read books for children and try and make them available at our library in Jaipur, also take this initiative across the globe. Please suggest some books which you think every child should read before the age of 15 (mostly the character defining age).

Thats a really honourable initiative that you are carrying forward , I wish you all the best for it . A lot of people don't realise how many skills can be picked up through the simple act of reading.

I would love to recommend

- Malgudi days by RK Narayan
- Tiger on a tree by Anushka Ravishankar
- The jungle book by Rudyard Kipling
- Who moved my cheese by Spencer Johnson

Also do let me know if I can be of any help for the campaign.

WHAT IF ROUND

What if you had to live with only three things all your life, what would the three things be?

Pen, paper and imagination.

What if you were given the power to change one thing from this world, what would you change?

I would reverse climate change.
Make human progress more inclusive and sustainable not for us but for future generations to come.
Mountains , rivers , birds & bees.
I have always been stealing them for my poetries,
but we have exploited them enough ,and it's time to give back.
Otherwise the generations to come won't have poems on rain and hurricanes.

What if you had all the money in this world, what would you do ?

If I HAD ALL THE MONEY IN THIS WORLD - Why would I need to do anything? Along with the answers,



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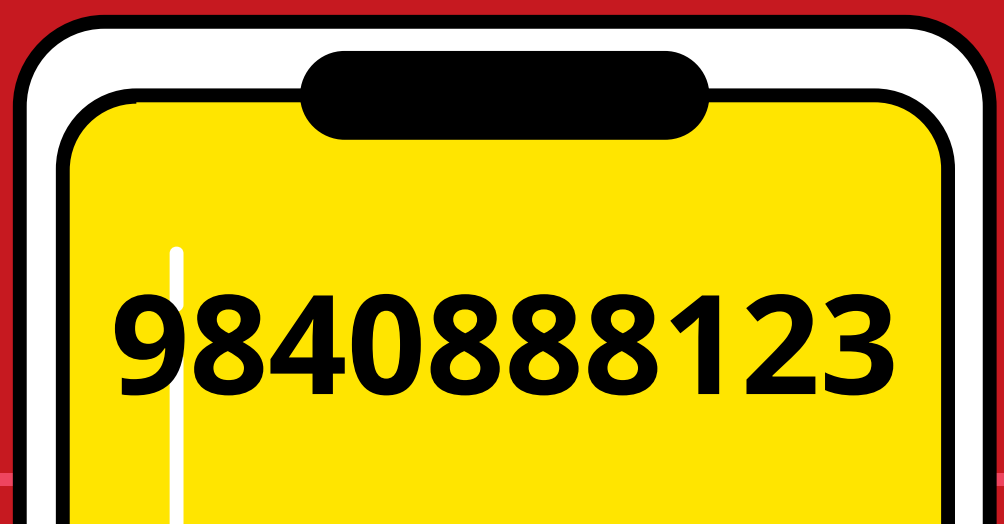
Why You need this?

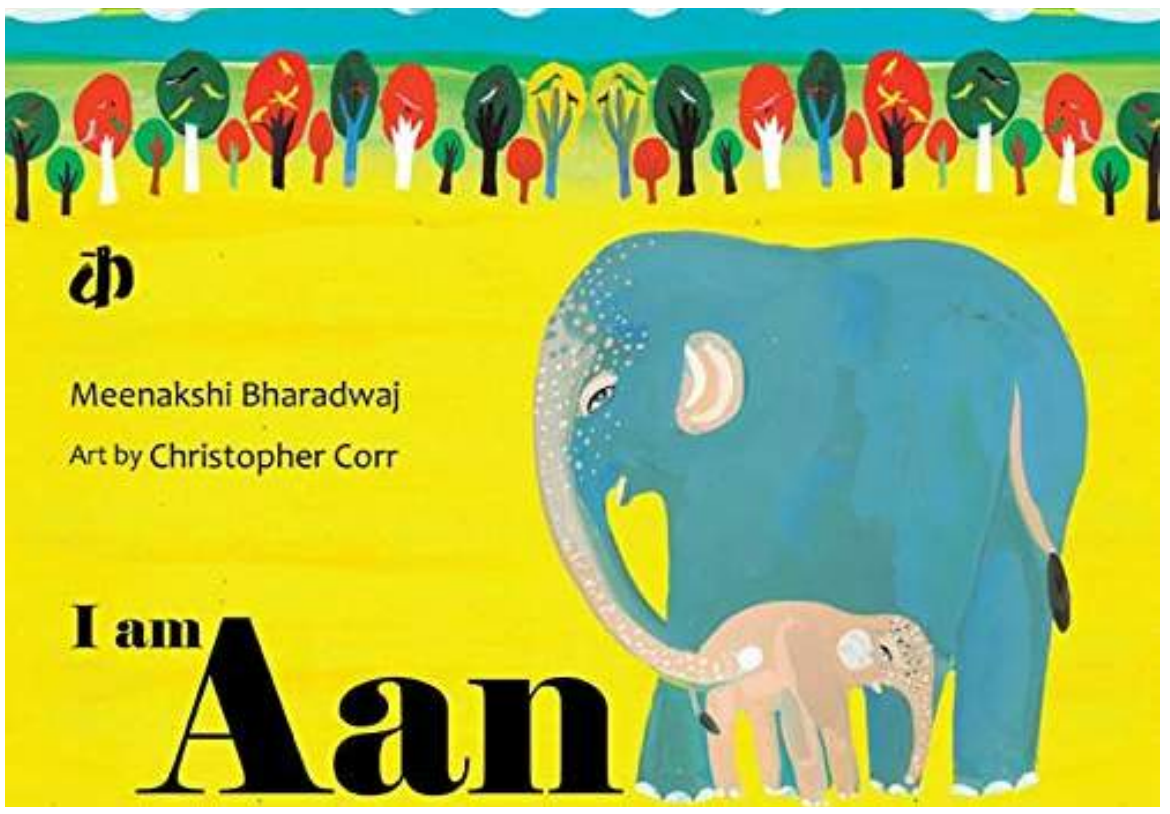
PERSONAL BRANDING

DIGITAL AUTHORITY

DRIVE TRAFFIC

Click Here for Demo Site of Manali Desai





I am Aan

Art: Christopher Corr
Author: Meenakshi Bharadwaj

This is the story of Aan, the elephant who was born deep inside the Western Ghats.

He lives with a herd of 20 cow elephants and their calves. Dadi Rani is an experienced cow-elephant. She leads the herd with her experience and protects it from the danger and tigers.



Aan has an elder brother and a sister, Megha. The whole herd is affectionate towards Aan.

But once when Aan turned was 12, she removed him out of her herd. What will Aan do? Will he die? Or he will survive? To know more about the story read “I am Aan”



BY YASHAN GAJBE
(9 YEARS OLD)

The illustrations are brilliant and it’s an entertaining story about how Aan, his cousins and sister play and live peacefully. The story tells us about the Aan’s growth from a baby elephant to an adult one. It also tells us about the characteristics of elephants and the female herd.

This story teaches us to stay peaceful and united.

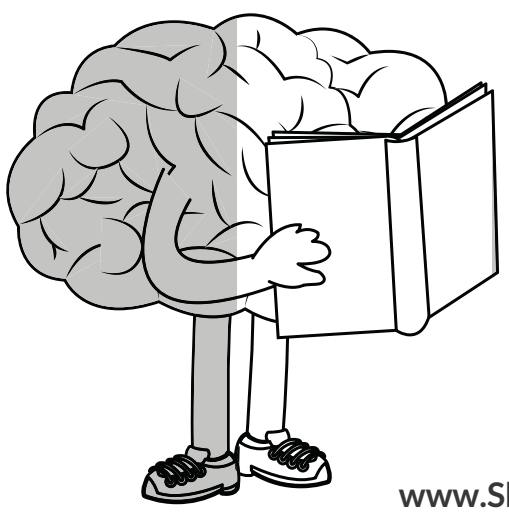
Did You Know ?

"INTERESTING FACTS for those who love the English language!" brought to you by Chandrika R Krishnan

- If you thought that apples were only red, green and yellow varieties, you are in for some surprise. We have black apples called Black Diamond Apple. They are found in Tibet and also known as Chinese Red Delicious.
- Spending just a few months in Antarctica can shrink your brain.
- Greenland sharks don't reach sexual maturity until they're 150. Looking at some parents of men around us, I am afraid they too believe the same about their 'ladlas'!
- The Ethiopian calendar is seven years behind the rest of the world.
- The word "oxymoron" is an oxymoron itself."Oxymoron" is derived from the Greek words "oxys," meaning "sharp," and "moronos," meaning "dull" or "stupid."
- Spaghetto, confetto, and graffito are the singular forms of spaghetti, confetti, and graffiti.
- The average mammal takes 21 seconds to empty its bladder. So, don't keep knocking on the door.
- Shakespeare invented more than 1,700 words. The Bard is said to have come up with more than 1,700 words including moonbeam, laughable, eyeball, bump, puking, champion, bedroom, excitement, and zany.
- Hinduism is the oldest religion in the world, and it's not a true polytheism. Regarding gods, Hinduism is not a pure polytheism. Hindus believe in one god, Brahma, who is manifested in thousands of other gods.
- India has 22 recognized languages.



Chandrika R Krishnan





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Contest Winners

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LT CDR BIJAY NAIR



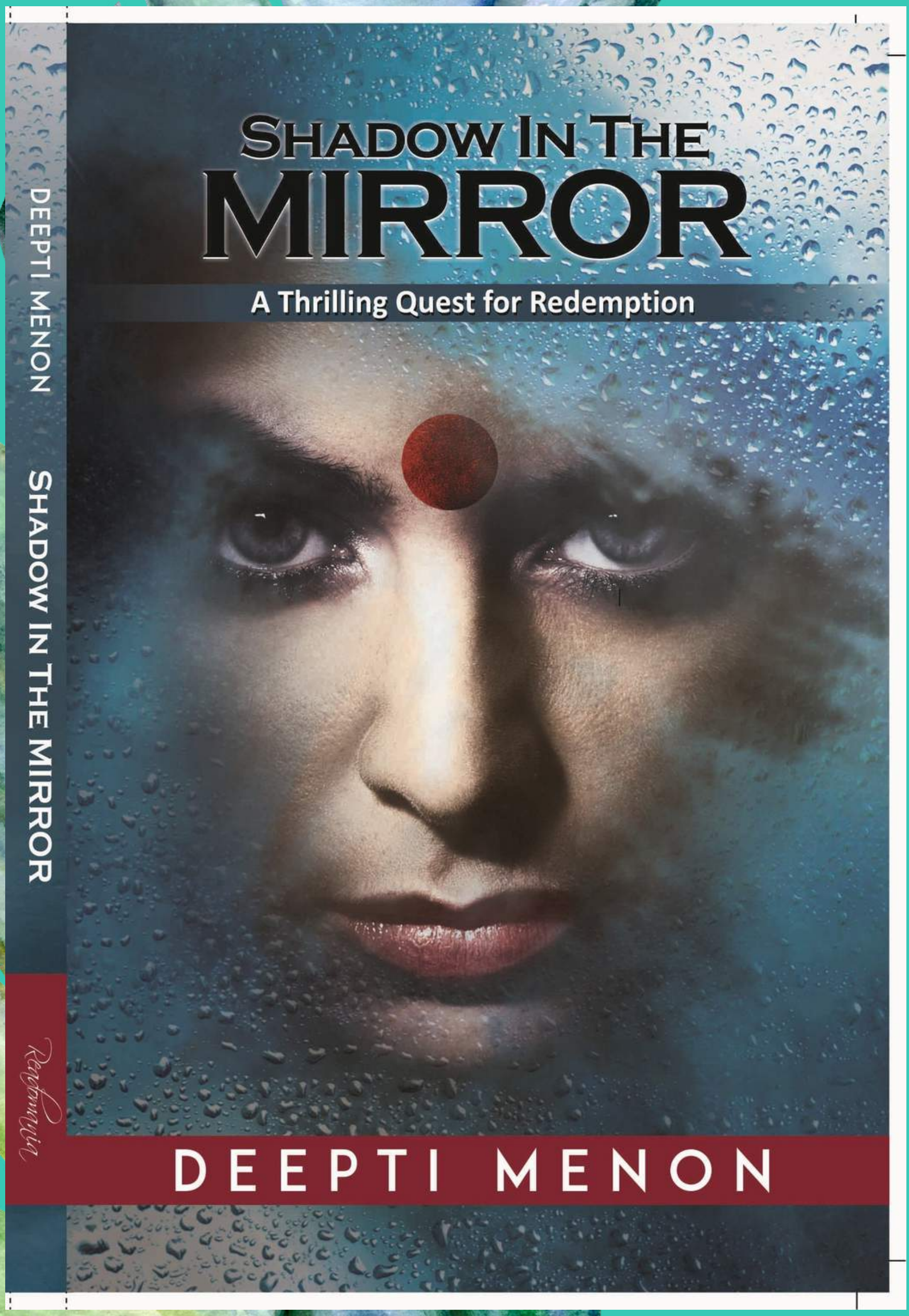
DEEPTI MENON

Winners of #Book Cover Contest

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Sharing Stories

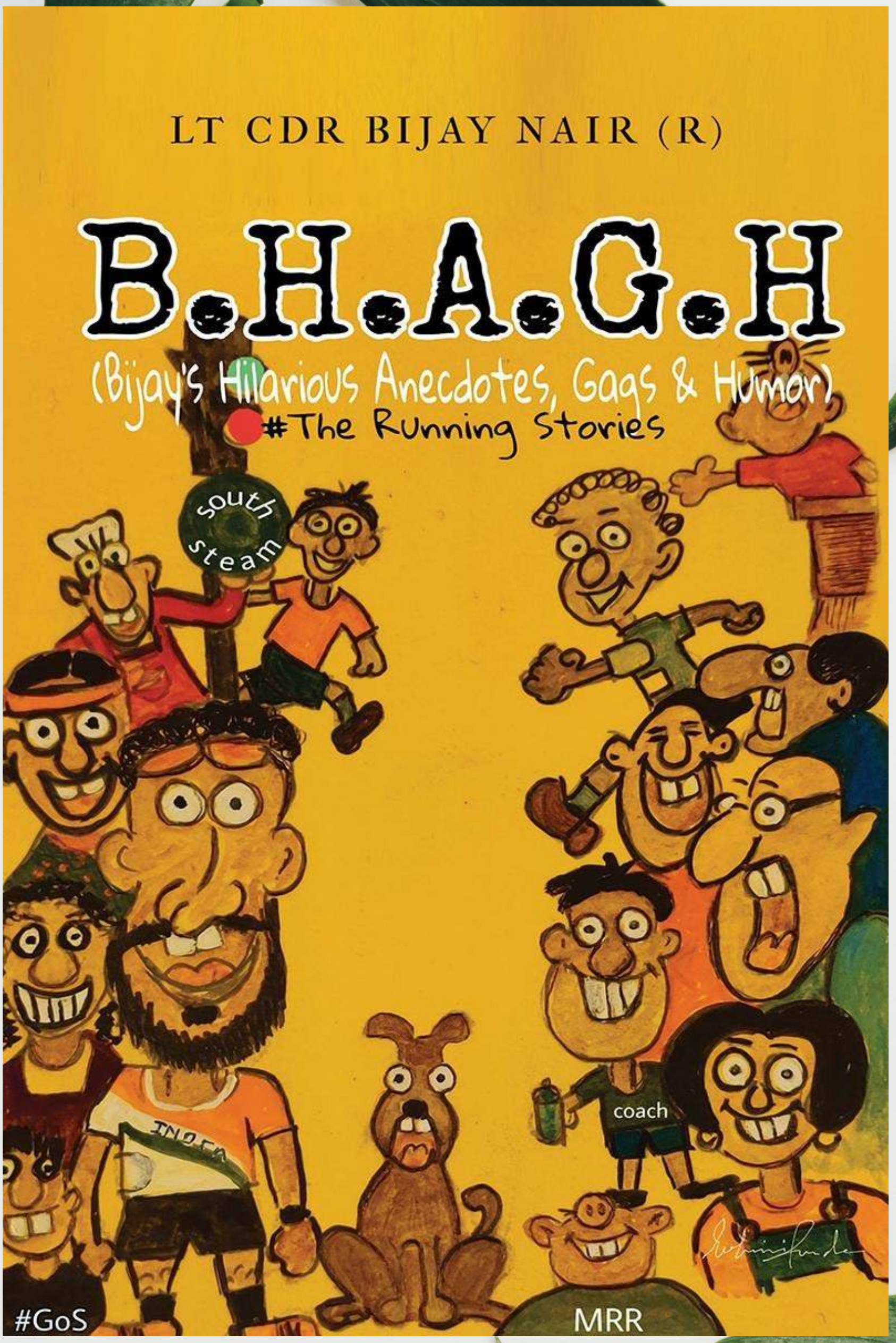


Shadow In The Mirror

By Deepti Menon

MAY 2021

www.SharingStories.in



B.H.A.G.H

By LT CDR BIJAY NAIR

MAY 2021

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WINNING ENTRIES

WRITING CONTESTS
MARCH'2021

QUOTES & TALES

Riddhi Bhatti - Winner

Ratna Prabha

Ramya V

Preeti S Manaktala

Narayani Manapadam

PICTURE PROMPT POETRY

Narayani Manapadam- Winner

Sreeja Mohandas

Vibhavari Bhushan

Ramya V

Kokila Gupta

WORD IMPACT CHALLENGE

Kokila Gupta- Winner

Ramya V

Sapna Martin

Narayani Manapadam

Preethi Warrier

Sharing Stories

www.SharingStories.in

Quotes & Tales

Blessing in disguise

Father and son were sitting on a peaceful shore when the boy began to sob.
Pulling him closer the father said, “The truth is hard for you, I know. Do you regret having me as your father?”

“Not ever.” The boy kissed his dad. “But it feels bad to be an unwanted abandoned child. Is congenital blindness my fault?”

“You weren’t unwanted. Its just that I needed you more than them.” The father quipped. “No girl would marry a crippled man like me. How would I become a father then. Our imperfections is a blessing son. ” The father sighed.



RIDDHI BHATTI

As an MBA and an ex-business analyst, I have always played around with numbers. Untill I discovered the magical world of words. Since then, words have been my best friends. And I am happily journeying through life with the inked pages beside. Besides books, paint and palette are my new-found companions. You can find me @www.instagram.com/riddhi_bhatti



The Threshold

O Mother Divine!
As you step out, clutching your black handbag,
your guilt-ridden face tears me apart!
Fret not, amma! I'll be fine! Just fine!

O my love! My wife!
As you wake up from the nuptial bed,
caught in the crosswords of home and office,
I'll do all I can to better your life!

O my darling girl!
As you free yourself from my clutching hands,
and step inside the big bad world of wolves,
I'll be the guiding light, watching you unfurl!



NARAYANI MANAPADAM

Narayani is a multilingual IT professional. Despite her work demanding MS Excel skills, she yearns for MS Word, so that she can play with, well, words. And yes, she's a crazy cat (wild and otherwise) person.

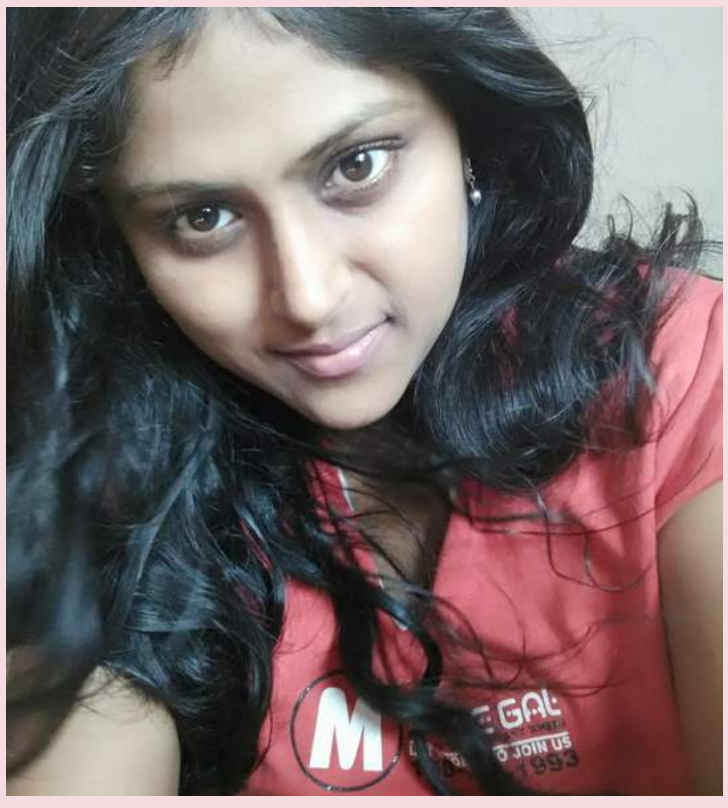


WORD IMPACT

The Colour of Devotion

Seven years old Raghavendra ran away from the temple and stormed inside his room in deep agitation.
He was very disturbed by the sight of his father's men pushing away Gopal bhaiyya and thrashing him because he had crossed Raghvendra- Zamindar's son's way towards his first temple visit!

When Raghav tried to protest, his grandmother silenced him saying, "These shepherd's kids are stinky and uncouth villagers! May God protect my Lalla from the dark complexion of these cowherds!"
However, once inside the temple he was shell-shocked to see grandmother prostrate in the feet of another cowherd- the dark-skinned village-dwelling Krishna!



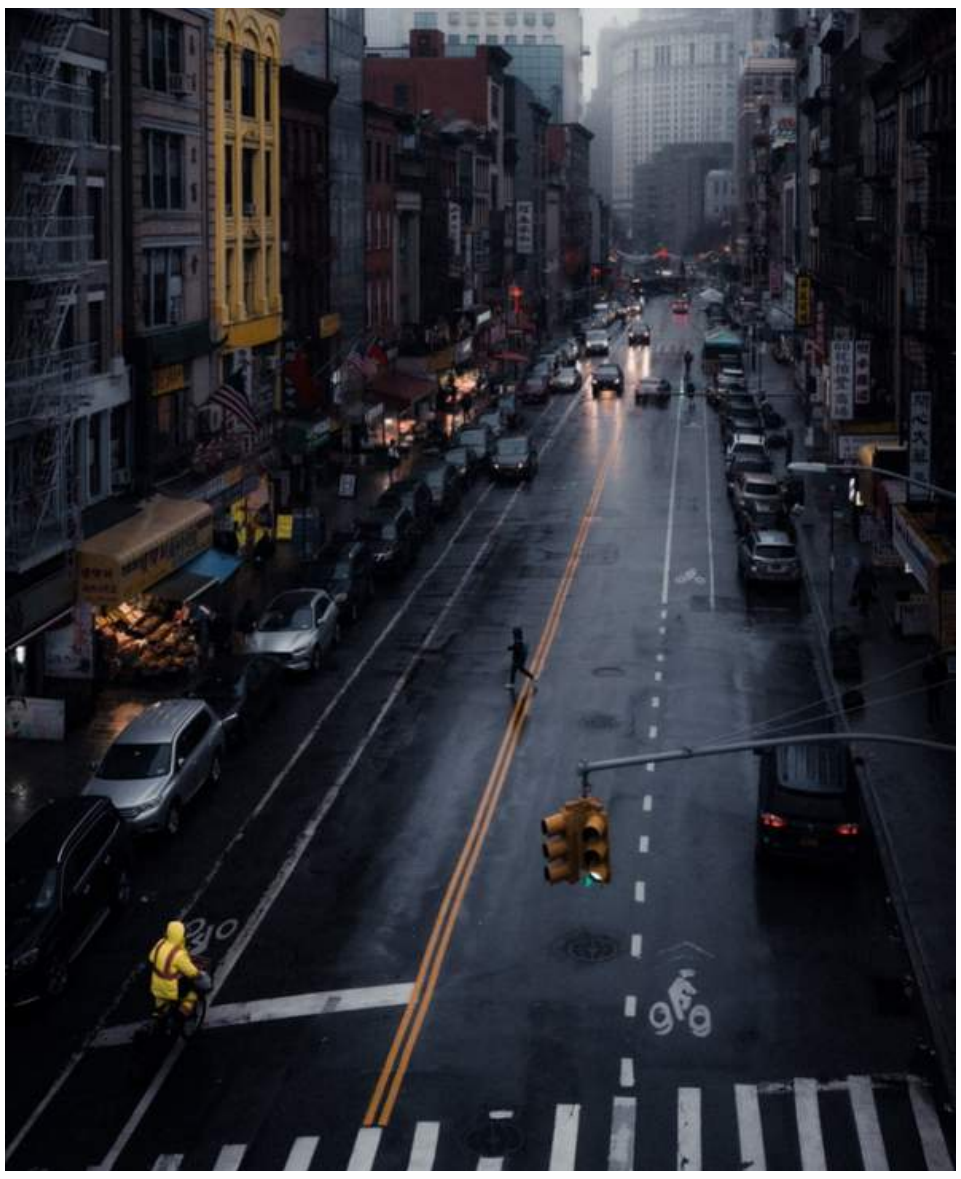
KOKILA GUPTA

Kokila Gupta is an Artist by nature, Reader by birth, Lecturer by profession, Traveller by passion and Writer/Poet by choice. Her work has been published in various International Literary Journals, Literary Portals and Anthologies.

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