



December 2020

World Harmony through Writing

# SHARING STORIES



LET'S EMPOWER OUR CHILDREN

Writing Contest  
Contest Winners  
Short Stories  
Poetry



**ANJALI MENON**

National Award  
Winning Director

**CHANGE MAKERS**

Reframing Destinies  
Teacher  
Bibliophile  
Young Author

**120+ ENTRIES  
BOOK AWARDS**



Katha Org  
#Letsmakestories  
@Pristine Books  
#Ektara



Vikky



Thomas



Yuktha



Antar

ImageSource: Friday Magazine

# EDITOR'S DESK

What did you do when all your plans and resolutions get messed up because of an unpredictable situation? Did you give up or try to find out new ways to reinvent yourself, your creativity and survival instinct? 2020 has been a big lesson to each one of us in some way or other. Though our ocean was similar, we all were not in the same boat. Yet, we were all connected with each other by the similar kind of pain, frustration and helplessness which the pandemic, Covid-19 brought with it in the year 2020. We spent most of the year staying inside our homes, trying to figure out how to sustain in these difficult times. 2020 showed us how to slow down and enjoy the simplicity in existence. It made us feel grateful towards the things which we had often taken for granted and made us cherish the core values of life.

For Sharing Stories, 2020 marked a new beginning. We began to think about something fresh and exciting to lift up the spirits and soon 'Sharing Stories Online Magazine' was conceived and launched. The amount of love it received was overwhelming and encouraged us to bring the best to our readers.

Sharing Stories believes in ethical entrepreneurship and community growth. Hence, behind each idea and project of ours, lies a greater goal and vision. I am glad that our readers and members have participated and supported each of our initiatives, be it the support to Acid attack survivors or 'Empowering Our Kids' campaign.

It is December 2020 and time to wrap up things for this year. Sharing Stories is glad to give a celebratory finish to this year with 2020 Book Awards. Since its launch, Sharing Stories has brought to you inspiring stories, interviews and prompts which made you think about the various dimensions of life through a different perspective. We shall soon be coming up with new and innovative changes on our platform for the community members, because Sharing Stories believes in constant and consistent reinventing and rejuvenating.

In this edition we bring to you the talented, National Award winning filmmaker Anjali Menon, who believed in her passion and followed it with all her heart. Along with her are lined up some really creative authors ; Antar Atreya, Vikky Abraham, Yuktha Asrani and Thomas. I am thankful each one of the authors who had been featured in Sharing Stories for sharing their journey and perspectives with our readers.

This year end edition carries a glimpse of our 2020 journey, a year which marked a change of perspective in the history of humanity. Mother Nature has made us realize that sometimes it is better to take a pause, slow down and appreciate what we have. We all shall carry our own stories of 2020 in coming years to share with the future generation to make them understand that what really matters in life. Wishing all our readers and members a Merry X-mas and a Happy New Year on behalf of whole team of Sharing Stories,  
Happy Reading...Blissful Writings!

## Piya Gajbe



# Abilash Geetha Balan

## Sharing Stories

Sharing Stories, at its core is a community built to spread the importance of Humanity. We are an extended family of creative people coming together for a unified cause of 'World Harmony through Writing'.

In our busy and tiresome daily lives, we somehow fail to acknowledge the importance of small things, those tiny gestures which bring a huge smile on our face. In this fast-paced life, there has been a lot of change of perception happening right in front of our watchful eyes yet somehow it fails to grab our attention. Our reference of happiness has shifted from great meaningful human values like love, empathy and compassion to owning a priced asset, taking false pride and falling prey to endless social and political agenda.

In this, rat race, we forget to live life, and ironically, for most of us, it takes a life time to really understand the true meaning of the word 'life'. At times, we sink too deep in the ocean of materialistic pleasure and false propaganda and by the time we realize this, it is already too late.

We, at sharing stories, are putting our best efforts to bring a subtle change to this challenge through writing. Our content, more specifically writing contest is designed in a way to occupy a tiny share of your mind-space, time and again to put yourself in a zone where you are thinking and writing about subtle things in our lives, re-empathizing the importance of Humanity. This positivity eventually gets shared with the readers to bring the same ripple effect. Let's make humans, humane again. Apart from spreading Humanity, we are also working on a few important things for the benefit of our community. We operate primarily on three pillars,

- Imagine - World Harmony through writing•
- Inspire - Next generation content creators•
- Incubate - a marketing platform for Authors, Screen writers and Bloggers.

In our second pillar, our efforts are focused on inspiring and helping upcoming content creators in their writing journey through our active community of established writers. Finally, we also want to create a platform where talented writers can showcase their creativity to the world and help them in book promotion and marketing.

We are excited to welcome this New Year, with a lot of vigor; we have planned some new and creative activities for the year.

Starting with the sharing stories book awards, User Generated Content platform that is getting built where our community members can directly write and publish content on our website and reach a larger reader base with 100 % writer credentials absolutely free-of-cost. 'Lets' Empower our Kids' a campaign which is very close to our heart, will have many prominent people participating and suggesting books for our children to read. We have more exciting contests, inspiring stories, book suggestions and a lot more, stay tuned for a fun filled year.

At this auspicious juncture, I would like to thank our community members who have been very supportive in our journey. The core members of Sharing Stories who work tirelessly behind the scenes to bring you the most engaging content.





# MERRY CHRISTMAS



## INTERVIEWS

Anjali Menon  
Vikky Abraham  
Yuktha Asrani  
KV Thomas  
Antar Atreya



## PARTNERSHIPS

@Children's Book by Katha  
@Ektara NGO  
@Book Summary by Pristine Books  
@Unprompted by #LetsmakestoriesDino



## LOVE FOR LITERATURE

Wordsmith Corner  
Did You Know



## # PROMISING FILMMAKER

Harish Soundarajan



## CONTESTS & GIVEAWAYS

Winning Entries November  
Contest Prompt December



## SHARING STORIES FAMILY

Story by Nipun Varma  
Poetry by Pratyay Das

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a yellow and blue patterned dress, is smiling and clapping her hands. She is holding a yellow bag with colorful patterns. The background is a textured blue wall.

SHARING STORIES  
**LET'S  
EMPOWER  
OUR  
KIDS  
CAMPAIGN**

[Click Here to  
Learn More...](#)

# FILM MAKER



Image Source : Indian Express

Anjali Menon is an Indian film director and screenwriter who predominantly works in the Malayalam film industry. She made her directorial debut with the film *Manjadikuru*. She won the National Film Award for Best Screenplay (Dialogues) for *Ustad Hotel* at the 60th National Film Awards. She was one of the founding members of the Women in Cinema Collective (WCC), an organization that focuses on gender equality in the Malayalam film industry.

She made her feature debut with *Manjadikuru* (2008), a coming of age drama set in 1979. It won the FIPRESCI award for the Best Malayalam film and Best Indian Debut. She also received Kerala State Film Award for Best Screenplay for the movie. Anjali's movies have depicted themes of the migrant experience and cross cultural interactions. Her film company Little Films India is based in Mumbai and Kochi.





**Anjali Menon, the filmmaker and Anjali Menon the person, do you perceive the world and people around you through the same lens? Let our readers know a bit about you, your family, likes and dislikes.**

I prefer to keep my private and professional lives apart for the simple reason of privacy. But I am fortunate that my experiences do power me to explore themes that are personal through cinema.

**You spent your formative years in UAE. What kind of impact did it make on your creative instincts in the long run?**

Having grown up in multiple cultures a hybrid consciousness is the gift you get but along with it also comes a sense of limbo. In me it translates into a need for connection with my culture and movies become a medium for that.

**Be it 'Manjadikuru', 'Ustad Hotel' or 'Bangalore Days', Anjali Menon's screenplay and dialogues have become synonyms of prestigious awards. What is your magic ingredient which infuses such life and depth to the movies?**

I have seen authenticity and relatability as an audience member and I try to find that I movies I watch. So when I make a film I am simply trying to achieve the same.

**With the advent of OTT platforms and web-series format, what are the changes the industry might face in coming years? Is this going to be helpful for the ones who want to bring stories around new, untouched topics which are experimental in nature?**

I think it's a great leveler as filmmakers from everywhere now have equal access and opportunity to reach their audience. So, content is what will really rule. The audience will decide based on how good the content is and not anything else. Also it cuts out all the middle men who profess to know about the market and what it "needs". It increases the life of a film way beyond its weekend box office run which is affected by a million factors other than the film itself.

**In context of 'Manjadikuru' of not doing well at the 'Box- Office', as an entrepreneur and an artist, do you feel that financial success does affect the artists and their art-form?**

**How can an artist be mentally prepared and stay afloat in the tide until waves begin to flow in favor? Like, until an 'Ustad Hotel' in your case?**

It takes a lot of grit and tenacity, but what funnily enough I think is, what empowers it best is childlike buoyancy to life and what it gives to you. It is so important to keep that spirit alive within. Only then will one enjoy the success when it arrives.

**Your stories are inspired by things around you and your characters are a reflection of your actors from their real life, how do you pick up the flavor for your dialogue writing? Is it character based, or premise based?**

Always character based. Dialogues are like icebergs which only expose the essence of a character, there needs to always be more which is unsaid and under the water. Subtext is what makes dialogue rich.

**Joining filmmaking has been a conscious decision for you. What made you choose this particular field in the creative arts?**

Cinema has the power to transport people, to bring about seismic shifts within them - through perception and emotion. That is such an incredible thing.

PHOTO BY J CARTER FROM PEXELS



**Our society often looks up to a larger than life figure as an idol, role model or a leader in various walks of life. How important is it to break those clichés and look for a more collaborative and an inclusive leadership approach? How this stereotype perception regarding 'leadership' can be changed?**

In my field of work, I know what it is like to be the minority or even the only one so the empathy helps. We are in a culture where a loud voice and an autocratic attitude can be mistaken for "leadership qualities", so it isn't easy to remain soft-spoken and democratic and yet get things done. Over time I am evolving my own way of leading. Currently it is to empower people to be able to contribute in collaboration with a shepherd style of leadership. I urge them to lead in their own department and if they are straying away from the intended direction, I nudge them back in. Not everyone understands a management style where you bring together people and make them care about the project enough to give their 100% to it. But it does bring about true synergy and facilitates growth of the individual with the group. Harvard Business School calls it leading from behind. But it is true that many who have not experienced such empowerment prefer the very limiting but familiar option of a leader who enslaves a team to execute his/her vision.



## RAPID FIRE

### Favourite....

**Place:** Home

**Person:** My Son

**Food:** Biryani

**Beverage:** Coffee

**Your other Talents:** Am a jill of all trades master of none. My latest interest is clay modelling & pottery

**First Love:** Books

**Favourite Quote:** "Be the Change"

**Favorite character from a book-** Sorry can't pick just one!

**Please share some words of wisdom, tips or advices to budding writers. If you had to do something differently as a child or teenager to become a better writer/filmmaker as an adult, what would you do?**

Read, read, read before writing anything. And when you write, don't write to be read. Write fearlessly, just spill yourself onto paper.

**At Sharing Stories, we have an ongoing campaign 'Empowering Our Children' 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).**

I love reading children's literature with big colourful illustrations. Some of my favourite titles are those that can be read by children 7+ and older

The Oliver Jeffers series of books Ithiyamala (traditional stories from Kerala)

There is no such place as faraway by Richard Bach

If you come to earth by Sophie Blackhall

Every Colour of Light by Hiroshi Osada

Jayneen Sanders books like The not so perfect princess and the not so dreadful dragon  
Shakespeare for Children by Geraldine McCaugrean  
Charles Dickens books – Oliver Twist, Great Expectations  
Sacred Myths by Marilyn Macfarlane  
SITA (Ramayana) – Devdutt Pattanaik  
Panchatantra tales  
Mahabharata  
Emily by Michael Bedard  
Letters from a father to his daughter – Jawaharlal Nehru  
Life story of Helen Keller  
Mill on the Floss by George Eliot  
The entire Amar Chitra Katha series

## WHAT IF ROUND

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

Weird that I can't think of any! Through the years the only material things that I have attachment to are books.

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

I'd remove bias

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

Share it.

**Even after so many years, the film industry shows a disparity in the ratio between male and female filmmakers, screenplay writers or technicians. Why do women, even in 21st century hesitate to take part in the technical side of the movie making business? How can this be changed?**

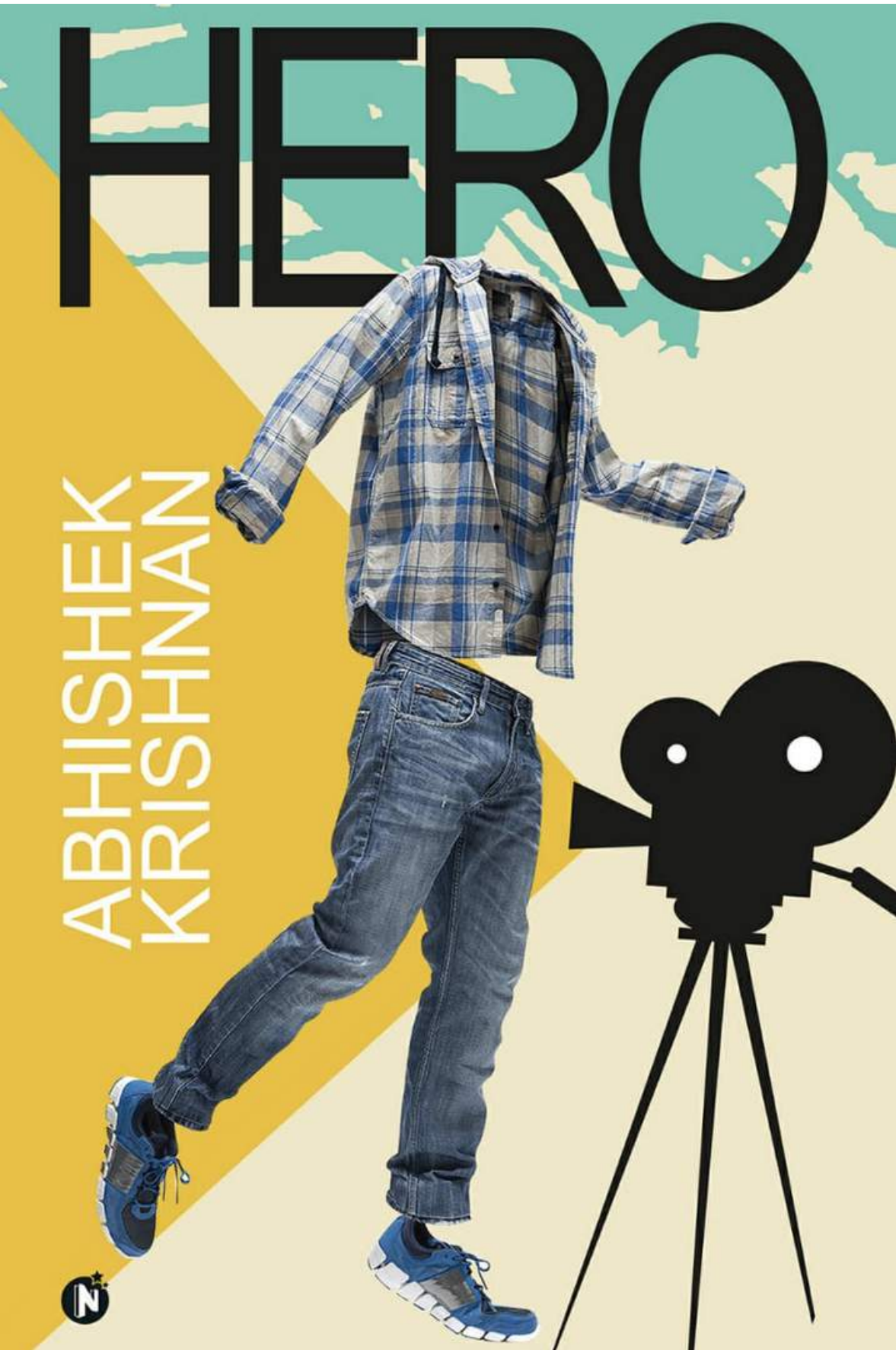
This is true of most non 9-5 industries. Biggest factor would be to ensure a safe professional atmosphere at work that will inspire confidence in more women and their families.



**Tell us  
about a  
Real  
Santa in  
your life.**

**WE SHALL SEND  
A SPECIAL GIFT  
TO THEM THIS  
NEW YEAR**

**Checkout Sharing Stories FB Group for  
Guidelines**



## Abhishek Krishnan

is an up-and-coming actor, screenplay writer and an aspiring director in the Indian film industry, primarily focussing on South Indian cinema. He has worked as a senior sub-editor and video content head at the notable Indian film website, Behindwoods.com

Being in films and associating with different kinds of people on the other side of cinema, Abhishek wanted to pen his experiences and package them into a neat story. This story, which he began writing as a movie screenplay, happened to turn into a book, thanks to the encouragement he received from his friends and colleagues.

### BLURB

Hero is the story of Abi, your average Chennai boy, with big dreams of becoming an actor. A favorite among his friends, Abi is a trustworthy, loving, college-going boy to whom popularity and merit come naturally. He effortlessly displays his talent and receives appreciation, his first love blossoms beautifully. But the second he finishes college, he's shattered. The small little bubble of college is burst and Abi struggles to accept the realities of life. The love of his life vanishes and he is faced with deceit, unemployment and complete dishonesty. His dreams of becoming an actor no longer seem practical and he is forced to, like everyone else, succumb to a normal, safe job.

But life, as always, is full of surprises and Abi finds his way back into love and also a way to pursue his dream. Through this rollercoaster ride, Hero takes us through the ups and downs of a man's life, without getting too philosophical about it.

# What our Community has to say....

## Rohit Dawesar


"One of the very few interesting and artistically good platforms on the web, reading and writing where I had enjoyed the most in these pandemic times. I always look forward to their monthly magazine edition. Kudos to team Sharing Stories for being a wonderful platform for artists and readers. Best wishes for the upcoming year."



## Priyanka Nair

Sharing Stories has been consistently providing an engaging space for old and budding authors. It came as a boon during the times of Pandemic spreading daily writing motivation and creating an engaging space for readers and writers. With all the hard work and dedication, the platform looks very promising. I wish all the best to Sharing stories!



A high-contrast, black and white close-up portrait of a woman with long, dark, wavy hair. She is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting her eyes and the texture of her hair against a dark background.

As a creative individual Vikky has spent many years in Advertising, Publishing and Media. 'Light' is her first book, written during the lockdown, where facts of our patriarchal society provoked her to think and re-examine her perception of reality. The eBook will surprise readers with the depth of truth packed in it. In just six short stories, using mundane events as a backdrop, she lightly skips through multiple heavy themes—child abuse, feminism, sexuality, social constructs and patriarchy—thus demonstrating their intersectionality, the breadth of their impact, and the terrible consequences of the denial of basic rights to women in India.

**Vikky Abraham**

**'Light' is your debut book as an author. When did the thought of writing a book come to you? Let the readers know a bit about your author journey and the people who played a major role in this.**

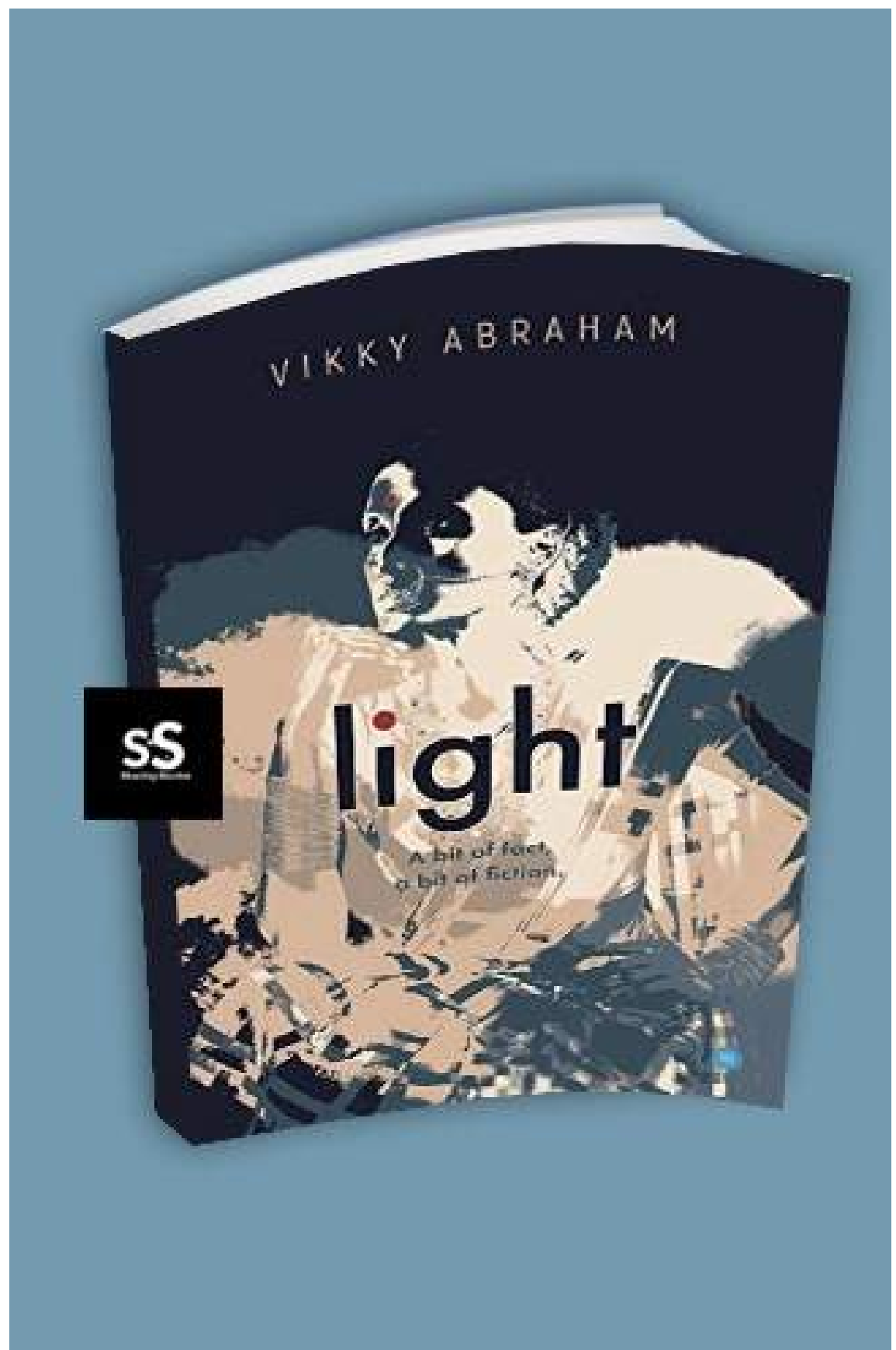
Being a part of the creative Industry for many years this was an organic shift to another media of expression. It was a spontaneous 'Stream of Consciousness' experience during the lockdown phase. Words leapt out in a frenzy which formed the many short stories as if on an inner cue! They are a series of short stories woven from the fabric of our society. Some dark, some intriguing and some heart-wrenching. Stories are woven from her interaction over many years with women from diverse background pan India. The underlying theme of injustice and patriarchy reigns in most narratives. The pathos is evident throughout different premises and social constructs.

The underlying theme of a society built on suppression and unequal status is exposed in a series of heart-wrenching stories. I consider Shashi Deshpande, Kate Chopin, Attia Hosain, Sudha Murthy, Sri Aurobindo and Yuval Noah Harari as my literary mentors.

**The six stories in the book revolve around women and the situations they face. Why did you choose to write your first book particularly women-centric?**

As a woman, I have over the years gathered many incidences around other women. Some left me intrigued and some simply shocked me. As we move into the 21st century its time I think to start a dialogue around these difficult subjects, if not change society...at least make a dent in it!

Women readers are heavily impacted by 'Light' as they can see a reflection of truth and society in the many narratives. And the title description - A bit of fact, a bit of fiction is justified! Readers especially women like the stark depiction, and the need for open conversations around topics ranging from child-abuse to unequal status in marriages, financial exploitation, early marriages, women's health and widow status in modern India.



**Who is the favourite character from your book and why?**

Supriya ' from 'Pandemic is my favourite character as she emerges from the threshold of victimhood and decides to save herself.

Though the characters in all stories are unconnected, Supriya's story is a depiction of how collective consciousness works...as the new age woman will no longer play the victim card but rise as a 'hero' and save herself.

**How has your experience in publication, advertising and media helped you as a writer?**

Tremendously, as having worked on many aspects of communication through different medias, my visualizing capabilities have been enhanced over the years.

Today as a writer I am able to combine all the techniques into one medium of expression, hence my short stories can be adapted to screenplays and use a visual medium to depict the unsaid effectively.

**Your book is an example of 'Less is More'. Is this your particular style of writing or you deliberately picked it up for the dark and realistic stories in your book, 'LIGHT'?**

Yes! – I honestly believe less is more!! The stories are dark in nature; hence I want to leave the audience with a sensation and not overwhelm them with too much details. This leaves scope both for Screenplay writer as well as the Director to have some creative liberties.

**Do you think there is something as 'Readers Block'? With the plethora of visual mediums around us, do you feel reading has taken a backseat?**

Yes! – I honestly believe less is more!! Visual mediums are enticing but nothing compared to the way an individual chooses to see his/her story. The only reason reading can take a back seat is if you don't like reading!

**According to you which are the 5 books, everyone should read and also who are your top 3 Authors and what impact they had in your journey as a writer?**

5 Must- reads – This is a tough one! There are too many to read.

- Autobiography of a Yogi
- 21 Lessons for the 21st Century
- The Power of Now
- The Fountain Head
- The Alchemist

Top Authors –

- Sri Aurobindo
- Yuval Noah Harari
- Shashi Deshpande

Topics ranging from Metaphysics to Philosophy to everyday life – all have a holistic approach with one weaving into the other effortlessly. For anyone who has read the above three will understand the depth of their intelligence and a life well lived, yet with a look into the beyond where only the flight of one's imagination can give a glimpse of the reality yet to be faced by mankind.



## WHAT IF ROUND

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

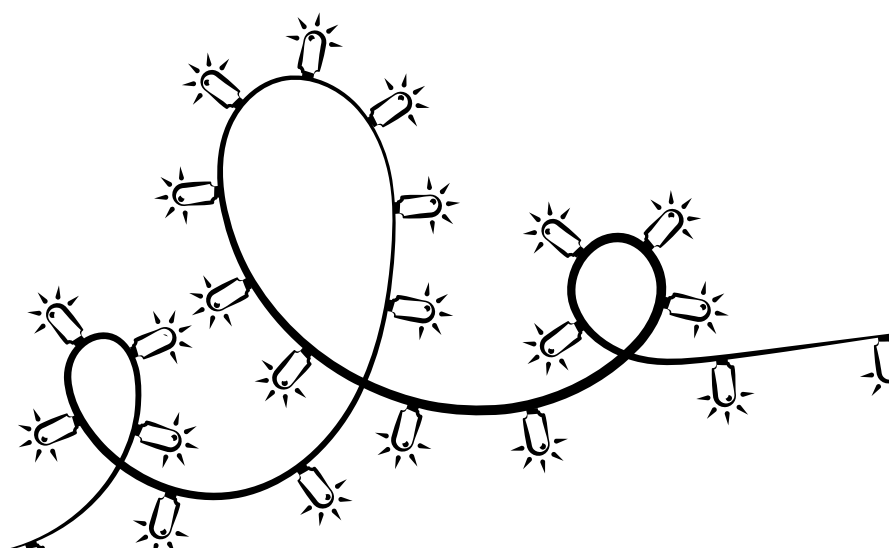
Daughter / Dog / Cat & One Book!

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

Patriarchy!

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

Take a long vacation and read all the books I want to!



At Sharing Stories, we have an ongoing campaign 'Empowering Our Children' 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).

- Sudha Murthy all
- The Little Prince
- P.G. Woodhouse all volumes
- Mark Twain
- Little Women
- Indian Mythology
- Ramayana and Mahabharata
- Rabindranath Tagore
- Jules Verne all books

**Could you share a few tips for Young Authors? If you had to do something differently as a child or teenager to become a better writer as an adult, what would you do?**

For me writing like any other creative pursuit is a calling. You cannot try hard to be a writer! It will come if it has to come...as you navigate through your life with empathy and a quest for truth. But what truly will help is to read different genres and different Writers to have an open mind and different perspectives on life.



PHOTO BY JONATHAN BORBA FROM PEXELS

## RAPID FIRE

### **Favourite....**

**Place:** Always near to the Sea

**Person:** Daughter / Dog / Cat in that order

**Food:** Rice and Goan Curry

**Beverage:** Tea

**First Love:** Hmmm...too many...

**Your Other Talents:** Dancing

**Favourite Quote:** "Life's under no obligation to give us what we expect. We take what we get and are thankful it's no worse than it is." — Margaret Mitchell

**Favorite character from a book-**

Scarlett O'Hara from 'Gone with the wind'



# What our Community has to say....

## Anupama Dalmia


Sharing Stories has definitely helped us cope in this pandemic year with their creative initiatives and innovative ideas. The team's infectious passion and commitment has been instrumental in spreading love, warmth and cheer. It has been a pleasure being a part of this community and I look forward to what the platform has in store for us in 2021.



## Vijayalaxmi Harish

Both as a reader and as a writer, Sharing Stories has been a great companion this year. Their features have been fun and insightful, and their contests innovative. I appreciate the boost they give to up and coming writers. The author in me especially appreciates their book listing service, and the Sharing Stories Awards initiative, which is open even to self-published authors like me.





Justroy is the Principal of a CBSE school. He has been serving in the field of education for the past 18 years. His vast experience and expertise in school education will be a great asset for those in the field who wish to implement innovative ideas to transform the young minds. He is a versatile and prolific writer whose hallmark is truth and righteousness. He is also an Educationalist who implemented innovation in school education. He is a Skill Expert who gives counsel to persons and institutions for their rejuvenation. He is also a Motivational Speaker whose motto is 'One World, One Mission-Save Earth.' He believes education is the self empowerment leading to social empowerment keeping truth intact. Education without inculcating a critical mind in a child is not education at all.

## Justroy

**“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.**

Certainly, I’m elated to let my readers know more about me and the important people who have played a major role in the Author Journey of mine. My mother has played a major role in making me what I’m today. My wife’s incessant support is a great motivation for me.

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

The burden of bearing cluttered thoughts and experiences for a long time brought me the idea of authoring books. And I began to pen down when I realized that the stories I have in store with me can change the world like never before. Therefore I began to de-clutter my mind through pen. Making the world beautiful is the ultimate aim of an author. The world will never be beautiful without truth. I have authored 3 novels, viz. ‘The Limit of Truth’, ‘Made For Each Other’ and ‘The Blueprint’. ‘Learning is Truth, Nothing else Is.’-is a quote from ‘The Blueprint’.

**Are your books inspired by real life characters or incidents? How much time do you spend on researching while writing a book?**

My books are inspired by real life characters to a larger extent. I don’t spend time on researching while writing. Well, I admit I had been researching for long five years fondling the idea of being an author one day. I just travel down the memory lane of real life characters that are already imprinted on my mind indelible. But I don’t hesitate to add some fictional flavor into it wherever it is inevitable.



## **Noble Visionary and Eminent Philosopher’**

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

Well, very rare books have inspired me. One among them is Animal Farm. My next novel is something of that genre. It could be a complete analogy like Animal Farm.

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

5 books everyone should read are:

- Animal Farm
- The Prophet
- The Miracle Worker
- The Life of Mahatma Gandhi
- The Mouse Trap

My top 3 authors are:

- Kahlil Gibran
- George Orwell
- Vikram Seth

**Tell us a bit about your family, likes and dislikes as a person.**

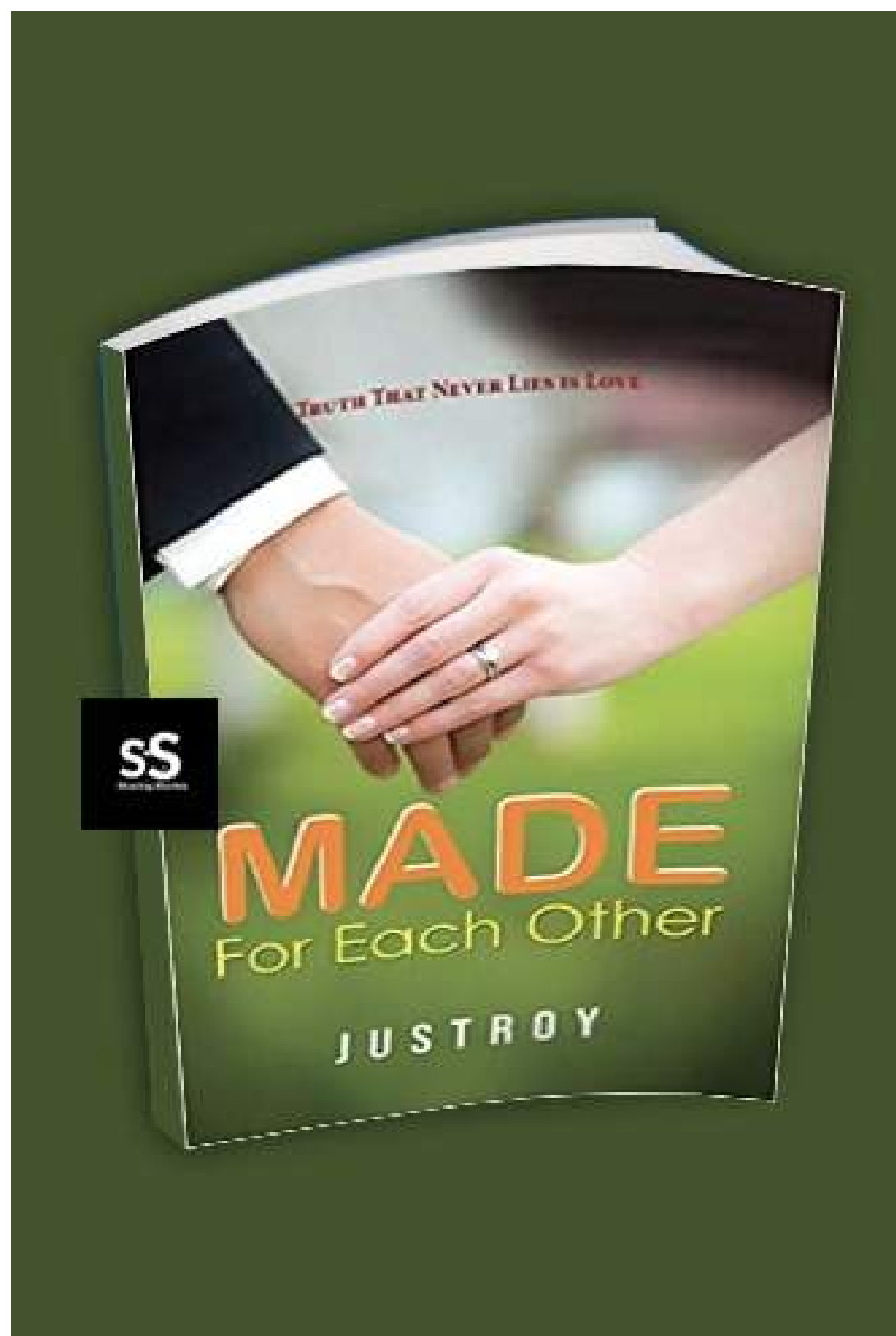
My wife is a teacher and we have twin sons. I like truth of all sorts and hate lies and hypocrisy. I keep hypocrisy above all sins. Hypocrisy is the origin of all sins, I believe.

**Could you share few tips for Young Authors?**

You need to dare to tell the world your stories no matter how raw it seems provided it holds the magic to make the world more beautiful. You can be fictitious enough to charm your readers but should not be at the stake of Truth.

**What was the most difficult part of publishing process for you? How can a budding author reach out to more readers using marketing strategies?**

Finding the right publisher was the most difficult part of my publishing process. A right publisher will cover up the whole scope of a budding author and help his works reach out to more readers with better marketing strategies.



## RAPID FIRE

**Favourite....**

**Place:** My Home.

**Person:** Wife

**Food:** Manioc with fish curry

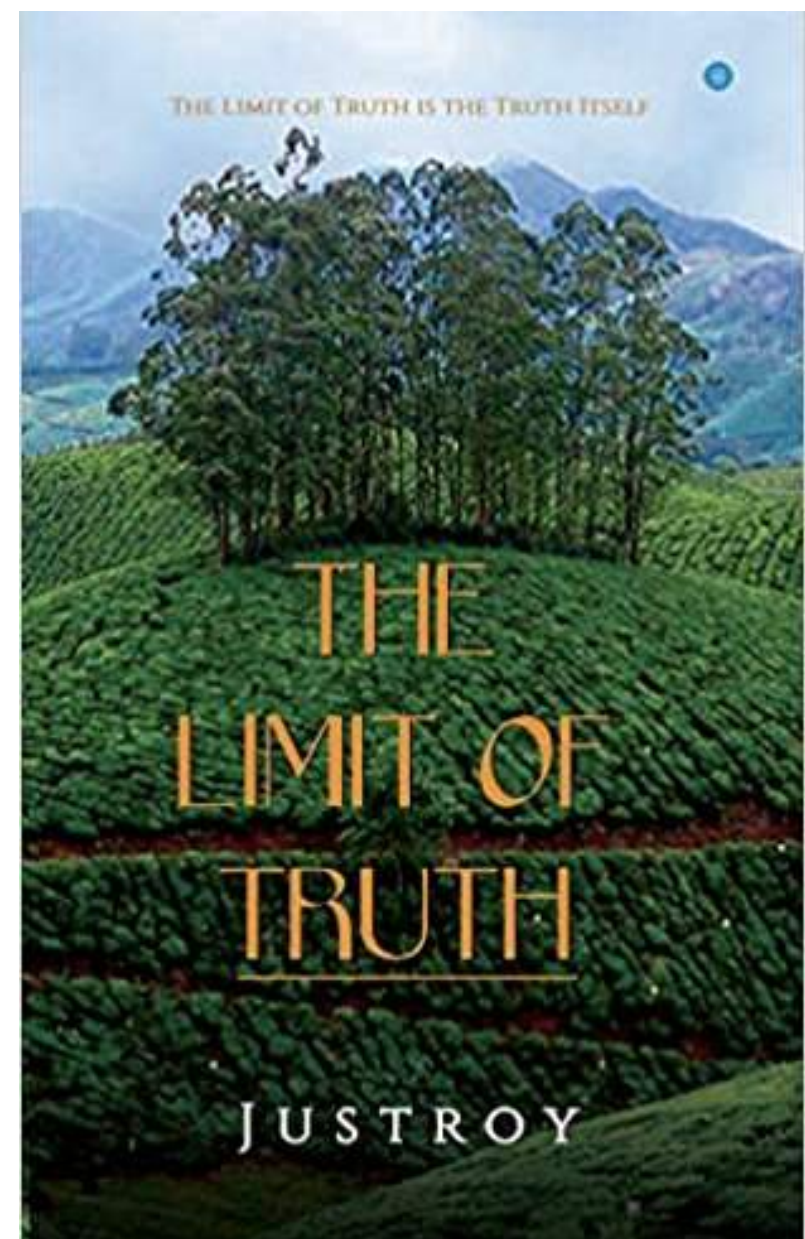
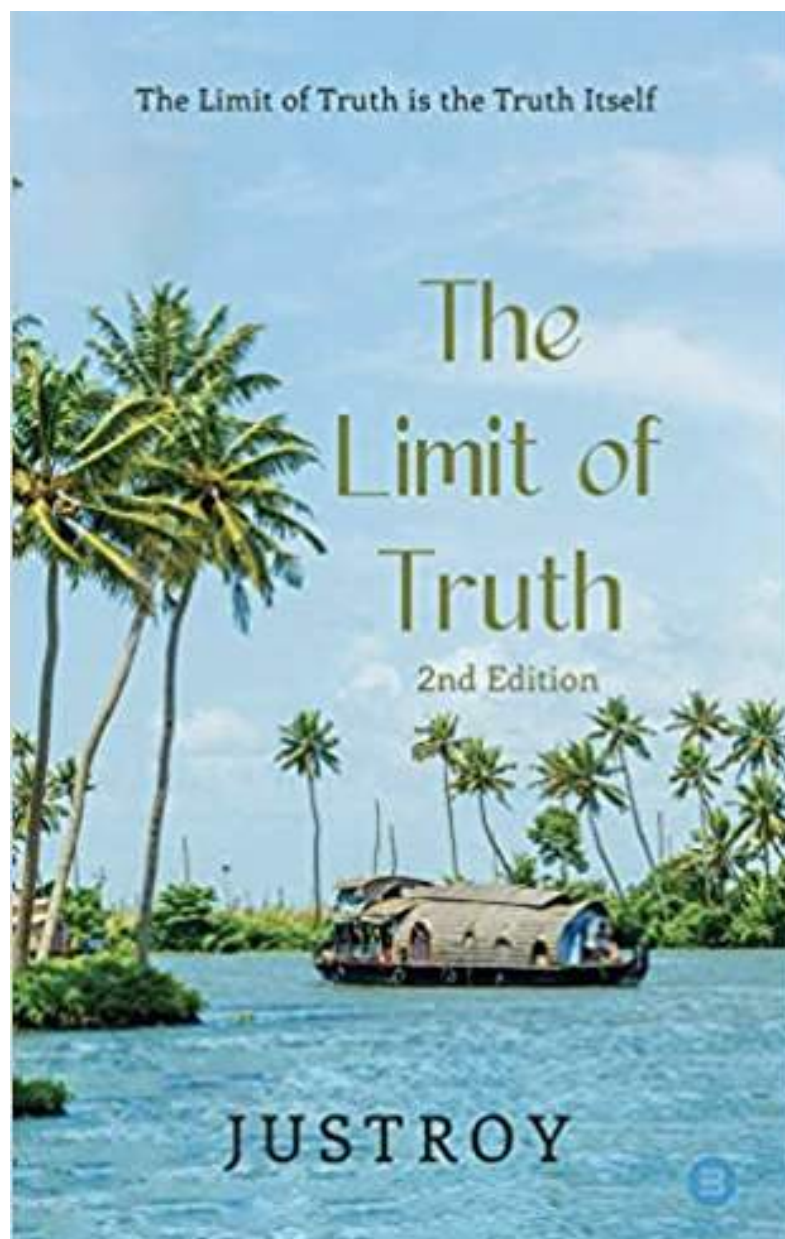
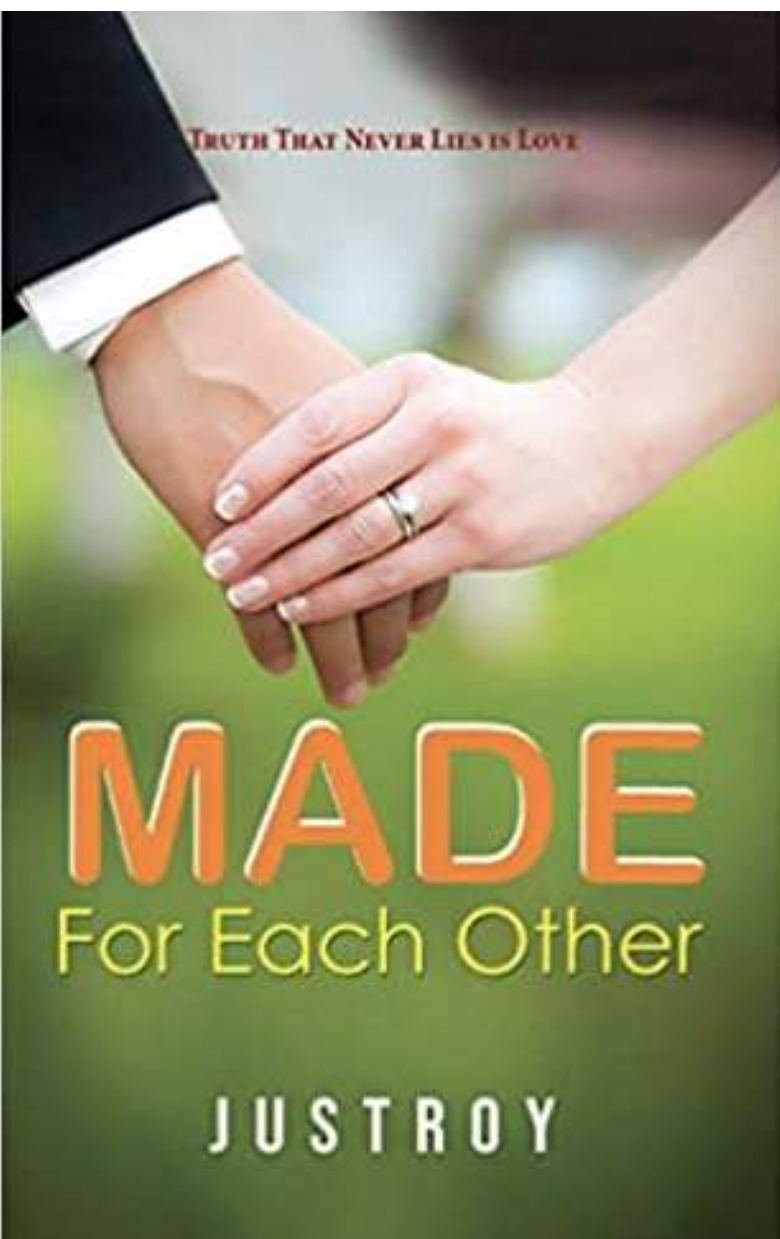
**Beverage:** Tender coconut water

**Your Other Talents:** Oratory skills

**First Love:** Never Proposed

**Favourite Quote:** "Truth That Never Lies Is Love."

**Favorite character from a book-** Melon from The Tale of Melon City. It is a poem composed by Vikram Seth.



## 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 Water

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

I would change the corrupted.

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

I would distribute the money equally among all and give all a chance to contribute in making the world beautiful.

At Sharing Stories, we have an on-going campaign 'Empowering Our Children' 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).

Holes-Louis  
SacharHatchet-Gary Paulsen  
Gullivers' Travels-Jonathan Swift

**Hope for the Best!!!**

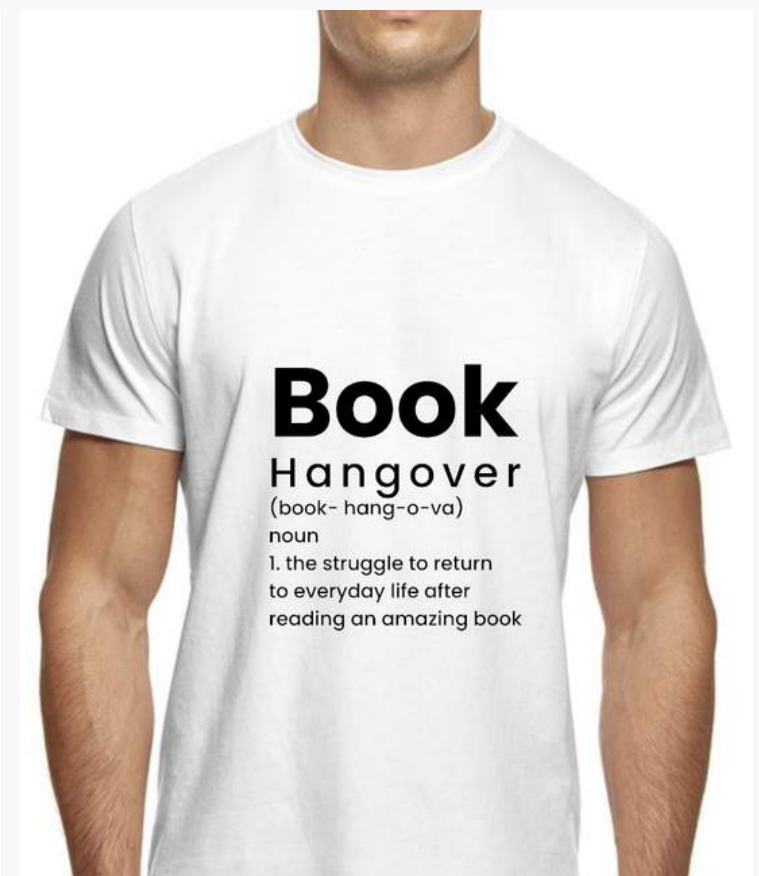


# SHARING STORIES ONLINE STORE

Get Customized Author / Reader Goodies



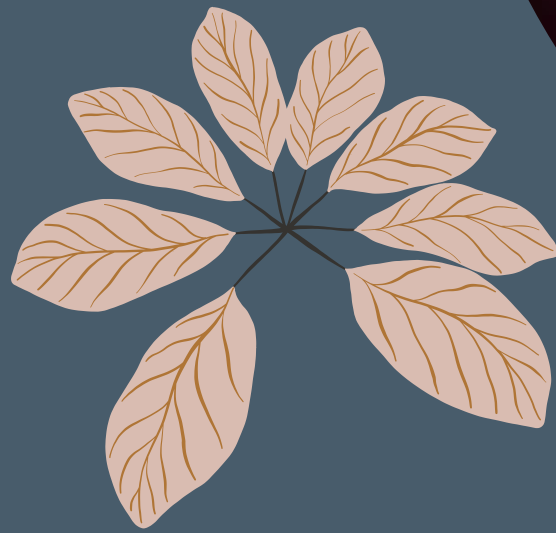
## SHOP NOW!!!



# What our Community has to say....

## Anupama Jain |

Sharing Stories has been generous with me this Pandemic year, be it supporting my second book - Masala Mix with an FB live, or featuring me in their 'Author Talk' Series or we chatting animatedly about books for children. These gestures were great morale boosters in a tough year. With Sharing Stories team helming this 'writer-friendly' platform, I foresee a great future for Sharing Stories



## Vasudha Pansare

Sharing Stories was my bright spot, my patch of sunshine during the pandemic. The admins of Sharing Stories were friendly and warm and encouraged all members to share poems and reviews. The competitions conducted by Sharing Stories gave us a purpose and motivated us to engage in creative activities during the pandemic. This was the forum where we discovered new writers and got from them useful tips for writing. In conclusion I would like to say that Sharing Stories has become an important part of my life.

“Some girls dream of a walk-in closet in their bedroom. I’d wish for a walk-in library in mine.” Yuktha Asrani is an indie author born and bred in the Garden City Of India, Bangalore. She holds a B.Com degree and has a work experience of seven years curating reading programs for children. Books play an integral part in her life. Caught one too many times with a novel hidden within her textbooks, her love affair with books has been constant. Writing poetry, watching horror and actionpacked movies and series are her favorite things to do, apart from reading, of course. She aspires to carve a niche as an author. ‘Handcuffed to Love’ is her first Romance Fiction novel. You can find her on Instagram and Facebook as - yukthaasraniauthor

## Yuktha Asrani



**“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.**

I am immensely grateful to so many people who have always had my back. As I begun this journey as a writer, I did not anticipate it would be such a challenge for a newbie. I was able to embark on this journey only because I have a strong support system. There is a long list of people I would like to thank. So, I would sum it up by giving my thanks to the Lord for blessing me with such a wonderful loving family and a supportive group of friends and well-wishers.

**When and how did the idea of writing a book come to you? Can you share a few lines from your book, ‘Handcuffed To Love’ and maybe give a bit of background?**

My husband used to jest with me saying that one day I will become an author. I never thought that the long-standing joke between us would actually come true. It was during the Covid lockdown that I started to pen down my thoughts. I surprised myself when the chapters of my story started freely flowing; and I was like why not actually give this a serious shot. I write poems as a hobby and Handcuffed To Love is my first novel.

Handcuffed To Love is a Contemporary Romance Fiction novel. I love reading books across varied genres. But Romance Fiction has always been my favored genre. I’ve put my heart and soul into writing this book and there were times when I actually felt my characters were living and breathing through the pages. This novel is a fun and light read with engaging elements of suspense and action- packed sequences to sweeten the pot!

The story has a perfect blend of quirk, wit and romance. There are several interesting conversations between the characters that help us relate to each one of them. I absolutely love the dialogues shared between the female protagonist Saanvi Malhotra and the hero Sean Wilson. The playful banter between Saanvi and her older sibling Chirag will make you smile at the beautiful essence of their relationship. Below is a snippet of one of the quirky dialogues between Saanvi and Sean.



Saanvi took a deep breath, filling her senses with his woody scent. “You know there are other colours besides blue, right?”

“You’re making up for the both of us in the colour department. Your bling is so bright that I wish I had carried my sunglasses with me. You’re blinding me with all that sparkle.” He pressed his lips together to prevent his smile from slipping.

“It’s called dressing up,” she shot back with sarcasm. “You should try it sometime.”

*A gist of the story-*

Saanvi Vijay Malhotra is a woman with a dream. She is feisty, smart, and witty, but her privileged life in New Delhi, India, doesn’t match her ambitions. She moves to New York to pursue a career in journalism with stars in her eyes and her heart on her sleeve. Sean Roger Wilson is a ruthless NYPD detective. He is a charmer to the T, and he is any woman’s dream man. A New Yorker to the core, he never plays by the book and believes in living in the moment. It Takes Two To Tango!

As fate has it, Sean handcuffs Saanvi — figuratively — in a whirlwind of passion, romance, and seduction. Sparks fly whenever they are within two feet of each other, leading to an overwhelming and alluring pursuit. Sean knows Saanvi spells trouble, but he loves living on the edge. Despite his roguish facade, Saanvi is determined to capture his heart. A tragic episode threatens to rip them apart. Will Saanvi meet her fate with Sean, or will she leave New York broken-hearted?

## Who is the favorite character from your book and why?

Oh Gosh! That's a tough one. As this story is so close to my heart I fell in love with the characters. Each character has played his or her part to help bring the story so beautifully to life. But, if I really had to choose, I would say the main characters Saanvi and Sean they are such charismatic personalities, one cannot help but fall in love with them.

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

I am just bidding my time before I lunge into my next book. Having said that, I would definitely love to continue this journey as a writer and hope and pray that the readers enjoy and appreciate my work.

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

Like I mentioned previously I read books across several genres. Naming only 5 books is a tall order. Below are the Top 5 books that have stuck with me either because the story was impactful or because the characters were portrayed brilliantly.

- The Promise by Danielle Steel
- If Tomorrow Comes by Sidney Sheldon
- Simply Irresistible by Rachel Gibson
- Once and Always by Judith McNaught
- Devil in Winter by Lisa Kleypas

### Top 3 favorite Authors

- Judith McNaught
- Lisa Kleypas
- Rachel Gibson

## Tell us a bit about your family, likes and dislikes as a person.

I was born and raised in the garden city of Bangalore. I live in Bangalore with my husband Roshan Asrani and my teenage son Rishab Asrani.

The important aspect of any relationship to grow, flourish and sustain is to embrace each other's strengths and weaknesses. I am extremely grateful for everything life has to offer. Each day is a new day which brings fresh hopes and dreams with it.

## Could you share few tips for Young Authors?

As I am a new kid on the block, I can only share inputs through my personal experiences, so here goes-

- Go with your gut.
- Live it up.
- Pursue your dreams.
- Give it your all.
- Savour the fruits of your labour.

## RAPID FIRE

### Favourite....

**Place:** Home.

**Person:** My Family

**Food:** North Indian cuisine

**Beverage:** Chocolate Milkshake

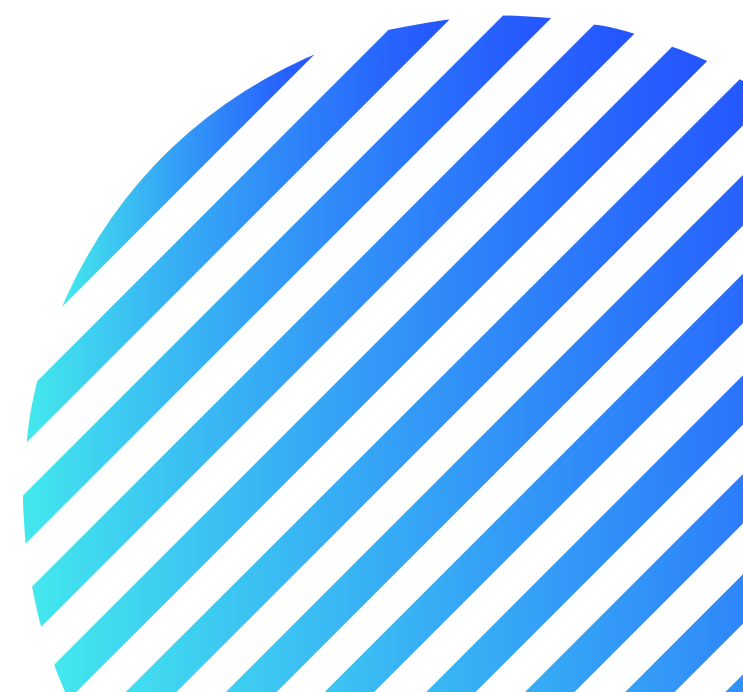
**Your other Talents:** Baking

**First Love:** My Mother

**Favourite Quote:** "I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious- Albert Einstein"

**Favorite character from a book-**

John Kowalsky from Simply Irresistible



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

I am just bidding my time before I lunge into my next book. Having said that, I would definitely love to continue this journey as a writer and hope and pray that the readers enjoy and appreciate my work.

**At Sharing Stories, we have an ongoing campaign 'Empowering Our Children' 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).**

The following are the names of few books/Authors across ages 2yrs -15yrs that are popular in the kids category as per my knowledge.

- Alphabets Are Amazing Animals.
- Charlotte's Web.
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar.
- The Tiger-Skin Rug.
- Giraffes Can't Dance.
- How To Wash A Woolly Mammoth.
- The Smartest Giant in Town
- I Can Read series.
- Peppa Pig series.
- Harry Potter series.
- Tom Gate series.
- National Geographic Kids series.
- Books by Ruskin Bond.
- Books by Roald Dahl.
- Books by Enid Blyton.
- Famous Five.
- The Gruffalo's series.



## WHAT IF ROUND

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

Food, Books and My Phone in that order 😊 ( Most importantly I would be like a fish out of water without my family and friends.)

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

I would wish for people to treat one another with more respect for a better and brighter tomorrow.

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

Hmm... Do we really need all the money in the world to be happy? I think not. Figuratively speaking if I did have deep pockets the first thing I would do is embark on a breathless chase of pleasure and go backpacking to the most exotic and serene locations across the globe. Topping the list is to experience the heavenly Northern Lights Phenomenon

# # LETSMAKESTORIESDINO

#100wordsquills #ButterflyDance



## HEMALEKHA PAPIA PAL

Lost in annals of history, lost in time,  
Lived Princess Hemalekha, a beauty  
sublime,  
The daughter of a sage,  
Was married to Prince Hemachooda  
coming of age,  
A Krishna devotee and scholar,  
mastered divine scriptures,  
never caring for riches or honour,  
The fragrance of her spirituality  
Unfurled across the kingdom  
embracing men, women, children,  
birds and animal alike,  
enlightening them with her spiritual  
light.  
Did pleasure bring suffering  
Or joy?  
She revealed  
Your pleasure is a figment  
Of your imagination,  
With all the gratifications you enjoy  
So, train your untamed minds  
To attain self-realization,  
The supreme truth always reminds.

## Colour Me

Colour me the colour of virginal white  
That I may defeat the demons lurking in  
the night  
Colour me the colour of menstrual red  
That I may my inhibitions of body shed  
Colour me the colour of harmonious  
green  
That I may from unknown fears my  
confidence wean  
Colour me the colour of steadfast  
brown  
That I may break glass ceilings and  
claim my crown  
Colour me the colour of powerful black  
That my Yin may overcome what my  
Yang may lack  
Colour me the colours of feminine hue  
That I may smash patriarchy and like a  
phoenix rise anew.

## DOEL BISWAS



# LETSMAKESTORIESDINO

## SHARINGSTORIES

[Click to Join Community](#)

[Click to Join Community](#)

## AFTD Quill

It was one of those days when deluge washes away the field workout schedule. Satish, the coach of a freshly appointed squad coming from across the country was ruminating. He had noticed natural awkwardness amongst the boys resulting from unfamiliarity. They must be conjoined as one mold, if the team must lift the junior world basketball cup. He thought. As dedicated to the cause of the game and as intuitive a person as he was, Satish summoned all the players... and what better podium to meet could it be than at the feet of their inspiration. The god of Indian basketball, Kushram. His statue standing tall and that of his son, as if following his game in an up-close, intent pose.

"Today we played to warm up and to know each other." Satish announced. "As the ball rolls, the player with whom the passing ball rests has to introduce himself." He instructed.

The game began well with a hoot and amidst lively cheer. The ones from mountains crooned their enchanting folk songs; some cracked jokes, threw riddles, and the one from Punjab regaled with his classic Bhangra beat. The ball continued to roll, and now it landed with Girish, the one coming from Kerala. Satish noticed how the boys had already begun to warm up amongst themselves. Girish with whom the ball now rested was animatedly exchanging some anecdotes from his childhood.

"Hey Girish! why not let everyone hear your story" the coach prodded

"Ok sir...sure." Girish realized the ball was sitting in his lap, and eleven pair of eyes waiting to initiate him into their friendly cape ...and so he began.

"The showers today remind me of the days of monsoons back 10 years. I was living in Palakkad where my father was posted. We were four thick friends- Hari, Vidya, Rahil, and me. We played zealously, shot baskets from every possible angle, smashed every possible hoop and drenched ourselves sweaty as if bathing in the monsoon rain. Wherever we found a spot where an angle challenged us, that spot became our 'adda.'"

Girish paused. Probably feeling those moments that dunked his spirit.

"Hmm, seems adventurous! go on" a buddy spurred him further.

"Then one day, during monsoon the waters at our 'adda' rose till our knees. Vidya, the youngest and shortest of us was scared. She suggested shifting to another place.

'the waters are rising too fast here' she said almost panicking; but I the eldest, with Hari who seconded me, were not ready for it.

We were all tall and enjoying the swoosh, the empowering sound of racing through the waters and even Rahil was reluctant about our 'adda' to be changed.

The deluge poured on furiously, for two days. The streets full of people wading through chest deep waters their smallest children riding their shoulders became an ominous sight of worse days to follow. I could no more move out and so didn't see my friends for a week. Next week when the spell of rains weakened, we could venture out and play."

"What next?" the boy from Delhi was curious.

"All of us voted that we go to the same adda, but now a long ditch had been dug up there, for drainage.

Moreover, it seemed as if the rain God was playing peek-a-boo with us. Accompanied with strong gales, a downpour swooned down sweeping us off our feet. We were stranded. A hailstorm followed. A large one hit Hari's head, and it began to bleed. The impact was so strong, that he fainted. We carried him to the only makeshift shade which we could find at that moment. After a few minutes, this shade was washed down too, but just then a car reached. It was my parents. We heaved a sigh of relief, and they took charge of the situation.

Soon, we took rescue in my grandmother's house in Chennai for the month of monsoon. I used to ask my father several times about going back to our own home in Palakkad. Almost a month after, my wait was over."

"We are going back this Saturday," father announced. "It was the moment of immense happiness for me. The day arrived. I was bouncing with excitement and craned my neck the longest my eyes scouring for signs of my fellow playmates.

When I set foot, I was dumbstruck at what I saw. The entire city lay in a thick layer of mulch from uprooted trees, damaged crops, and lost mud houses. The huge loss of life and property was evident by the absence of its presence.

When I went to see my friends, there was no sign of them! I asked after them, and the milkman, the only person I came across there told me that all the people had been rescued to safer places. Back home our furniture was being loaded into trucks. Next day we took the lane that lead us out of the city. This time, forever. I realized that I would never again see my dear friends, and sadly was not even to bid goodbye before leaving the town. I never met them again. However I never stopped playing basketball, the game, my only living connection with those playmates from Palakkad."

**SHWETA  
AGARWAL**



# SAY IT WITH AN IDIOM

---

## "GET SOMEONE'S GOAT"

To upset, irritate or anger someone.

### Example of use:

The way she corrects everything really gets my goat!  
Thank you very much, Miss Know-it-all!

### Interesting fact:

#### Origin -

This expression actually comes from horse-racing where goats are used to have a calming effect on thoroughbred horses. To calm down an easily upset horse, its owner would place a goat in its stall the night before the race. But some opponents would cheat by stealing the goat to agitate the horse and make it lose the race!

There's a real life lesson to be learned here: if someone gets your goat and you get upset, remember, you lose!

Source: [www.myenglishroutine.com](http://www.myenglishroutine.com)

# WORDSMITH'S CORNER

---

### Meaning

ADJECTIVE: rare - Illusory or imaginary and therefore disappointing

NOUN: rare - A person who offers benefits which are illusory or disappointing

### Word Origin

Early 18th century (as a noun): from Arabic Barmakī, the name of a prince in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, who gave a beggar a feast consisting of ornate but empty dishes.

### Example Of usage:

'All virtuality is a Barmecide feast and Internet is virtuality par excellence.'

## "BARMECIDE"

Merely  
Christmas

Source: [www.lexico.com](http://www.lexico.com)

# What our Community has to say....

## Bhaswar Mukherjee

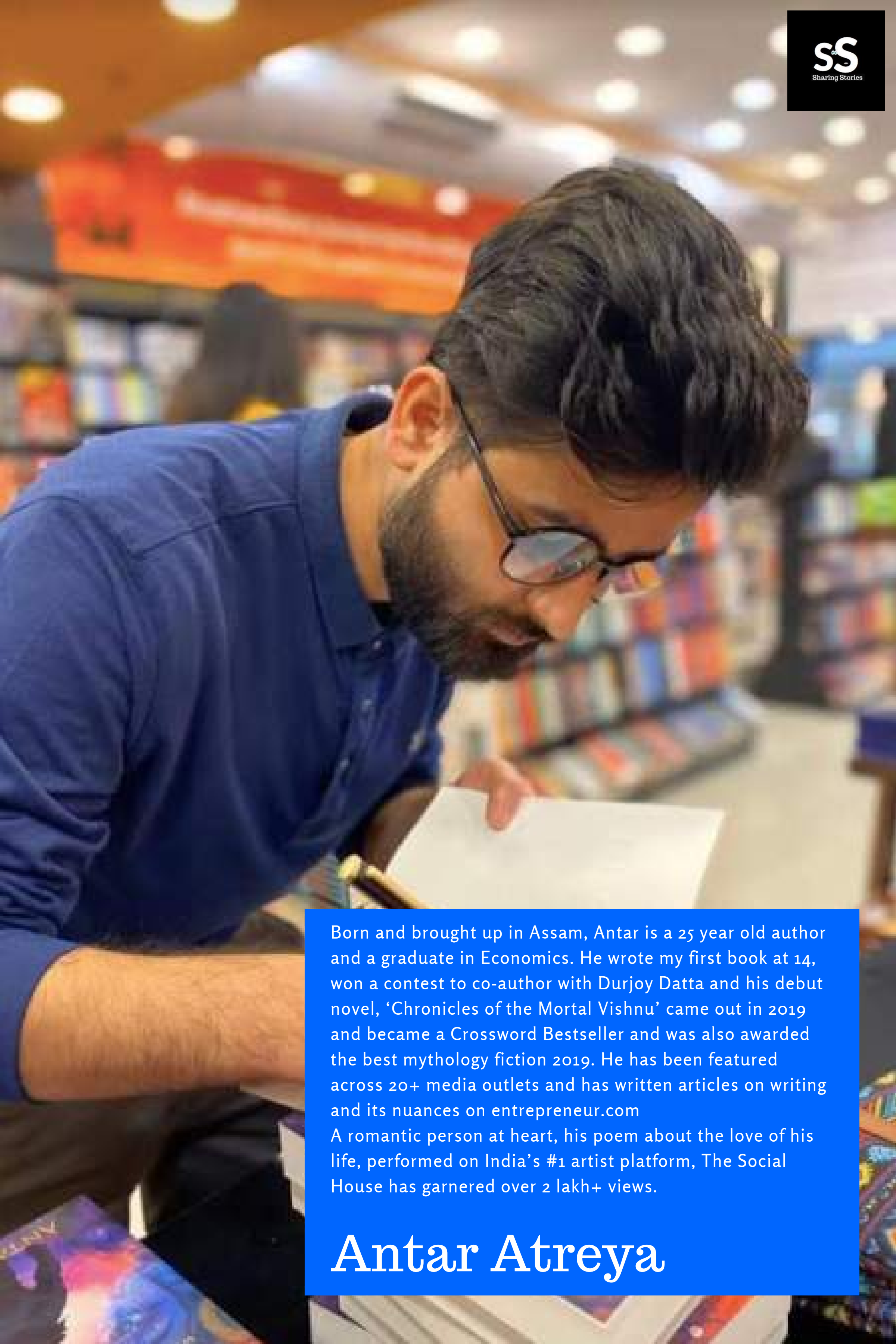
It is wonderful to share space with Sharing Stories. My debut solo anthology "it happens" was born in May 2020, the same month that Sharing Stories was formed, and this association will always be special for me. As this difficult year draws to a close, here is a prayer-May our trajectories be meteoric!!



## Zainab M.

"One of the good things that happened to me this year was meeting a lot of people in the writing community, including Sharing Stories. I have been a part of it since its inception, and I have seen it grow splendidly in a matter of months. I wish it all the success in the coming year."





Born and brought up in Assam, Antar is a 25 year old author and a graduate in Economics. He wrote my first book at 14, won a contest to co-author with Durjoy Datta and his debut novel, 'Chronicles of the Mortal Vishnu' came out in 2019 and became a Crossword Bestseller and was also awarded the best mythology fiction 2019. He has been featured across 20+ media outlets and has written articles on writing and its nuances on entrepreneur.com

A romantic person at heart, his poem about the love of his life, performed on India's #1 artist platform, The Social House has garnered over 2 lakh+ views.

## Antar Atreya



**Your first book was published at the age of 14. How the journey to become an author began? Who played a major supportive role in this journey of yours?**

Since a kid, I always was certain that I'd be writing books but never thought of being a full-time author. The reason was fairly simple. My Dad and Mom had a love marriage and they used to write love letters and poems for each other. I went through them at an early age and found my love for words and realized how it can melt hearts. Also, my parents inculcated the idea of reading as they got me more and more books. And all these, along with my love for TV shows made me write my first book at 14

**Tell us a bit about your book, "Chronicles of the Mortal Vishnu". Who is the favorite character from your book and why? Are you working on anything at the present you would like to share with your readers about?**

Well, it is mixture of mythological philosophies, fantasy elements, political and economic events and an action and battle packed saga. Basically a saga of good versus evil but it is fresh tale, not a re-imagination of sorts and is backed with larger than life scenes, characters and infusion of rationality in mythology and cosmic things.

**You were an atheist for a larger part of your life. How did you turn towards writing in the mythological genre?**

Well, it was a butterfly effect, honestly. After my grad years, I was in a dilemma over joining a job or doing something entrepreneurial and during that phase, I suffered from certain illnesses, my dad's health deteriorated gravely and there were also certain family issues. All these, pushed me into depression and I was on medication.



But as only medication and counselling did not help completely, I started training in yoga. Then, the interest in yoga evolved my interests for the ancient school of thoughts of India. Consequently, I read the Bhagawad Geeta, Mahabharata and episodes from Hinduism and realized many things about life and living well. Thus, I felt this is what I must do; write tales inspired from Hinduism's episodes and principles

**How much research part and how much fantasy part works when writing a book in the mythological genre?**

Well, research and imagination, both are equally important in writing a mythological saga. Research is paramount for especially curating war and battle scenes, so that they look and feel real. Also, for the depiction of various religious philosophies and wisdom enhancing scenes or conversations, research and understanding religious or spiritual words is vital. And everything else I believe is your imagination and creativity.



**As a creative person, it is difficult to focus both on writing and marketing your work. How can a writer balance both of these without hampering the craft and creativity in the process?**

Personally, I have had experiences with marketing and sales as I read myriad internships during my grad years. So, it was not a very difficult or overwhelming thing to create promotional strategies for my book. However I would say, bifurcate both the tasks. When you are writing, make it a beautiful love story between you and your manuscript. And once done with it, read and research about marketing trends, previous campaigns and frame your own. When and if help is needed, go for the experts.

**According to you which are the 5 books, everyone should read and also who are your top 3 Authors and what impact they had in your journey as a writer?**

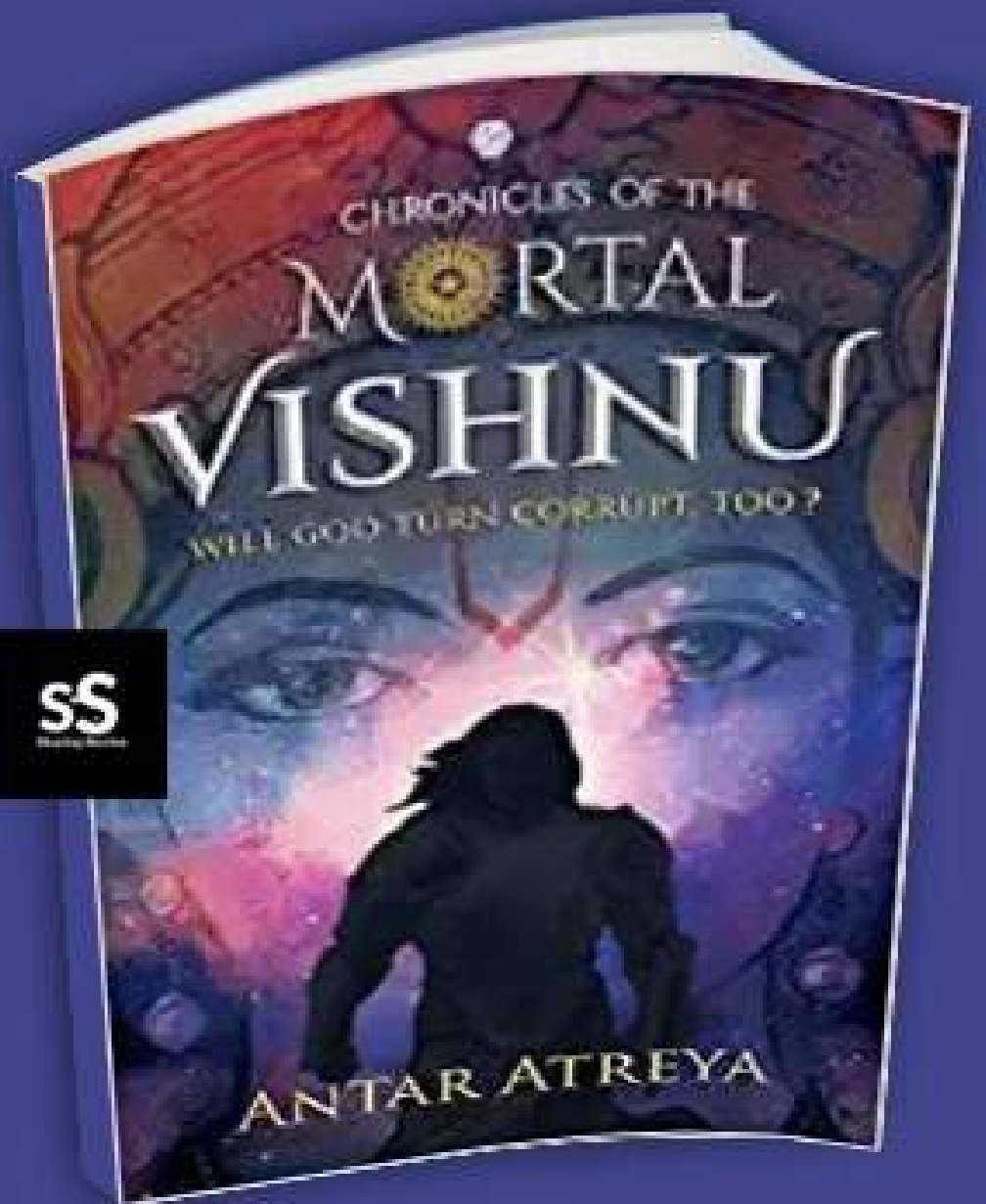
I would settle for these 5 books – Becoming, Ben Hur, Pride and Prejudice, To Kill a Mockingbird and The Mahabharata (not in any particular order).

And personally, authors who had an impact on me are – Amish Tripathi, Harper Lee and Jeffrey Archer. For me there will never be a book better than To Kill .... And hence, I have always admired its author's ability to write something that could emotionally connect with readers across continents.

**Could you share a few tips for Young Authors? As an author, where do you see yourself in this writing industry five years from now?**

Firstly, every author should write in a narration and tone that suits him. I mean, if someone is a jovial person, it is best to write in a humorous tone. That adds to the strength and makes it more real. Secondly, research about the book market in a profound manner and be prepared to sell your own books. Finally, every author must have a unique style. Eg. My books will always be more descriptive, detailed and exponential with the story overlapping across genres.

Well, five years down the line, I believe I would be writing books for some major publishers and may be also work on scripts and screenplays. I would also try to be a versatile author and after mythology I may venture into thrillers.



## RAPID FIRE

**Favourite....**

**Place:** Home and anywhere I am in a date with my lover.

**Person:** Any one is impossible to pick.

**Food:** Indian desi-styled food.

**Beverage:** Soft drinks of any sorts and lassi.

**Your other Talents:** I believe I have had some good experiences with marketing, negotiating and striking bargains, which are auxiliary skills mandatory today for an author. I try to never be rigid. I consider it a talent because it helps your grow and evolve.

**First Love:** Driving. It is therapeutic for me.

**Favourite Quote:**" If you are the smartest person in a room, you are in the wrong room"

**Favorite character from a book-** Scout Finch.



**Tell us a bit about your family, likes and dislikes as a person.**

My mom and dad both are bureaucrats and I also have a younger brother. They have always been my constant support and I have learnt to love and spread happiness from each one of them.

As for my likes, I love watching shows and series and learn a lot of life lessons from fictions. I am a romantic person at heart, an extrovert and believe in expressing whatever you feel. And about dislikes, I do not have any such pre-meditated issues but yes, I cannot stand when people close to us are not in their real selves. I cannot fake things and so I hate people faking emotions or words or anything.

## WHAT IF ROUND

**At Sharing Stories, we have an on-going campaign 'World Harmony through Writing' where we encourage writers to pen down their deepest internal thoughts, daily for at least fifteen minutes. Their new ideas and profound thinking shall help to bring out some positive changes in the world we live in. We would love to hear your thoughts about this initiative. Do you view writing as a kind of spiritual practice?**

That is wonderful! Big hug to Sharing Stories! Writing down one's thoughts helps in many ways. It will help in self-introspection, it will also aid in shedding away negative or disturbing thoughts and also one would grow by understanding oneself better.

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

An unlimited storage of on-screen contents, a diary and anything that symbolizes Lord Krishna.

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

That at least on a public platform nobody can bash or further victimize someone who has suffered from sexual violence of any sorts. Blaming the victims is what encourages rapes and molestations.

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

Invest them to create more wealth and would definitely get involved in movie making.

# What our Community has to say....

## Santosh Bakaya

I have been associated with Sharing Stories ever since its birth, and have watched it grow and gain a certain sure-footedness. Through this commendable platform, I have come across some wonderful new writers, enjoyed the creative prompts, and read some exquisite poetry and prose. I doff my hat to the highly diligent and innovative Sharing Stories Team ♥. You are doing a wonderful job and I am proud of you all. Here is wishing you all the best in the Year 2021.



*jingle bells*



## Ratna Prabha

The first time I heard about Sharing Stories was on 19 July 2020 when I saw their FB post inviting creators to write for their monthly Word Impact Challenge. The word was "Justice," and their prompt touched a deep chord.

The words magically flowed, and my submission was the winning entry. Seeing my name and my poem in print worked like a stoke, kindling the embers of my writing desire into a full-fledged flame.

Their incessantly regular interactions with established, and novice authors gave me a lot of new insights into the world of writing, from the monthly magazine as well as Live FB interactions. I eagerly look forward to reading the monthly magazine which is replete with wonderful and interesting elements including author interviews, sparkling short stories, poignant and pretty poems, the prompts for the monthly contests, and of course, to see if my submissions for the previous month made it to the winner or special mention list. I especially love their "What if" section under author and other celebrity interviews. Wishing you many, many more years of inspiring work, both for yourselves as well as aspiring writers like me. I believe my connection with the team of Sharing Stories is one of the best I have. Thank you for being there!

# Sharing Stories | Humanity



Ek Tara is a registered Trust that works with girls and women from the largest slum communities in Kolkata, India. Our core projects on Education, Health- Hygiene- Nutrition, Community Engagement and Skill building engage the most vulnerable girls and women from these slums. We, at Ek Tara, believe in giving opportunities and choices to children and helping them grow the way they would like to, and in empowering them to chart their own futures. We help build resilience and inculcate knowledge by being engaged and being supportive of them in their learning journey by:

- Providing quality English medium education- to make all students well-rounded, application driven and future-ready individuals
- Giving equal importance to holistic development by stressing on Extra Curricular Activities, Social- Emotional Learning.
- Preparing them to be future ready with knowledge and practise of 21st century skills ( through digital literacy, stem learning, civic literacy etc)
- Make families partners as opposed to beneficiaries by building their capacities.
- Preparing the students to be agents of change
- Integrating all programmes with the UN SDG's ( with focus on 4 and 10).

The families of our children are all engaged as daily wage earners whose entire life had been turned upside down by the Pandemic. Their problems were compounded by Cyclone Amphan which hit the city in May 2020. Since then these families have been relegated to the lowest position possible with girls and women being the worst affected. Through the pandemic Ek Tara continued to provide access to education inspite of the digital divide, distributing food rations and other essentials to ensure these families could live with dignity and the children continued to learn. Ek Tara currently reaches out to 1300 children and women through its programmes on Education and Skill building. From January 2021, Ek Tara will launch its new state-of-the-art education facility which will house its projects on Early Childhood Learnings, Primary and Middle School Sections, School Support projects from senior school students, Digital learning with focus on STEM learning, Extra curricular Activities with focus on Reading, Sports and Arts. This school will reach out to 2500 children in the next 3 years. For more details on Ek Tara please refer to the attached introductory note and our website: [www.ektara.org.in](http://www.ektara.org.in)

  
**Ek Tara**  
Her Abilities. Endless Possibilities.

# Ektara

## Transforming Vulnerable Communities through Education

## NGO Profiling

# Change Makers | Ektara



Ms. Vinita Saraf



Ms. Namrata

## Educate, Engage and Empower girls and women to become agents of change.

Ms. Vinita Saraf has a strong commitment to creating educated youths, from first generation learners. She has designed high quality, cost effective and comprehensive services for the children from marginalized backgrounds, using an eclectic approach tailored to the unique needs of every individual. She has worked on enhancing self-esteem and social skills via education among the young adults in the largest slum area of Eastern India. With a BSc Honors in Geography from Calcutta University, a Degree in Interior Design from Sheffield School of Design, New York, a Degree in both Spanish and German, she started her career as an Interior Designer. Later after having travelled extensively she started her own travel concern, 'Creative Escapes' and specialized in curating holidays with a difference for Women Groups. While running these enterprises successfully, she walked into the social sector as a result of her real life experiences of daily interaction with different communities.

Having been on the Board of an NGO working against Trafficking, both Ms. Saraf and Ms. Sureka realised that that the city's poorest and vulnerable urban communities can flourish if its girls and women are equipped to drive change - in their own lives, families, and community. What started as an informal crèche in 2011 with a handful of women and children, Ek Tara has grown into the area's most reputed and only English medium pre-primary, primary and middle school project for girls, with a range of support activities, all of which help in arriving at the comprehensive development of each child. In keeping with Ek Tara's aim to uplift communities, the NGO also runs a vocational training unit for mothers and older girls who can gain employable skills and also sell their products under the social enterprise and its brand Ek Tara Creates

Ms. Namrata Sureka is the Co-Founder of 'Ek Tara', facilitating the women, girls and children of the Slum areas of Topsia & Tiljala in Kolkata, providing Education & Livelihood skills to empower them to be self sufficient. Ex-Trustee of 'Anantara' and 'Padatik' - initiatives promoting Indian cultural heritage through events in the form of Performing Arts like Dance, Theatre, Music & Art. She has also been the President in 2017-18 of the 'Ladies Study Group', a 50 yr old ladies organization, set up by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, to encourage women to mobilize their talent and help them participate in issues related to social development.



# THE SILVER LINING

The sun was about to set. Birds kept rushing home, their dark flying figures in perfect contrast with the apricot tinted sky. Oblivious to this artistic masterpiece on the sky-sized canvas high up, people kept running hither and thither, the junction, as usual, stifled by the evening traffic. The streetlights reluctantly flickered into life; their yellow eyes dull and groggy.

As expected, the mobile teashop on rickety wheels appeared at the junction. Flanked by Ranga, its owner and his wife Shyamala, the teashop occupied its usual spot on the side of the road. The tempting aroma of freshly brewed tea and piping hot snacks announced that the teashop was ready to serve its customers. Passing the junction without getting tantalized by the shop's delicacies was a true test of willpower. And not many were that strong-willed, which was quite obvious from the huddle of people who loitered around the teashop eagerly awaiting their turn to get served.

Though well past their fifties, the couple was quite efficient in handling the crowd.

It had only been a few months since Ranga started the snacks business, but he could recognize most of the faces around. It wasn't surprising; he had always been good with people

A smile here, a nod of acknowledgement there and an overall personal touch made sure that every customer enjoyed at least some amount of individual attention. Although totally alien to the theoretical side of building high quality products, customer loyalty and enhanced customer experience, Ranga ran his business in a way that would give any B-school graduate a run for his money. He believed in people more than anything else and treating them well was the least he could do.

Wiping sweat from his forehead, Ranga looked around. The evening felt warmer than usual. Shyamala was busy brewing tea. Poor lady, he thought. Despite all the struggles, she had been with him through thick and thin, always supportive and ready to take the lead whenever he was down. He still remembered the day when he met her for the first time. She looked timid and fragile, but it was her eyes that got him attracted to her.

Her eyes spoke of a rare mix of emotional warmth and fierce determination. Being a people man all his life, he knew right then that she was the perfect partner for him. They had big dreams, but reality was mercilessly harsh, quite different from what they dreamed about. But that wasn't new for him. As a kid, he had dreamed of saving the world, saving its people, flying around with his red cape streaming behind him. He pictured himself flying in the sky, saving lives.

It didn't take long for him to realize that he was a mere mortal, sans any superpower. Growing up, life's deluge of challenges forcefully brought him down to earth. Instead of flying high, here he was, barely keeping his head above water by running a rickety teashop.

As the evening wore on, the crowd thinned out. As usual, Shyamala packed the remaining snacks carefully while Ranga cleaned the premises before closing the shop.

Once done, they started their journey back, Ranga pushing the cart and Shyamala holding the packet of snacks.

They had to meet their premium customers on their way home- the ones who didn't have a roof overhead, the ones who couldn't afford to pay. But for Ranga and Shyamala, the silvery smile of gratitude on their cloudy faces was payment enough.

The couple was home empty handed, but with hearts brimming with joy.

After parking the cart, Ranga followed Shyamala into their hut. Before getting in, he looked up at the sky.

The moon looked lustrous and serene. The stars smiled at him. Ranga closed his eyes. Taken in by the moment, he smiled softly.

True, the red cape was missing, Ranga wasn't flying high either; but along with his partner, he surely was living his dream.



**Nipun Varma**

FROM SHARING STORIES FAMILY

# DRIFTERS



We are drifters...  
Disappointed, miss-appointed.  
We find laughter in cry and truth in a lie!  
We seek shelter in the abyss,  
We quarrel, we kiss...  
We drift apart but then we meet

We make roads in the sky  
As we wanted to fly  
To the sky and beyond  
To the milky-starry pond  
That glitters in the night,  
In the shadow of fright!  
We make ends meet  
And then say goodbye.

We are drifters of hope  
Of love that doped...  
In our veins, it lies  
As we laugh and cry  
Of moments of memories...of time.



**PRATYAY DAS SARMA**





Born in Trichy, studied Information Technology in Chennai and undergone Newyork Film Academy Online Course with the help of passionate friends who reside abroad. Have worked as an Actor, Screenwriter, Director, Producer, Art director & distributor. Recently enrolled as a member of Eurasian Creative Guild Community. Also co-ordinating with many film festivals and helping other aspiring film makers globally. Cinematography was my keen interest initially and later found that director inside me started to overlook the hidden treasures of independent thoughts. Inspired by many great directors who have been role models in thought process experimenting and timely execution. Started my passion of Film making in 2012, also have great interest towards independent film making and film festivals market analytics.

Have completed 2 experimental independent films and 2 short films till now. Another complete comedy entertainer is half way done and expected to revive back in 2021 considering COVID. First independent film was titled as Mei (The Truth) which belongs to anthology category which consists of 10 short films like a series of events starting from 2000 till 2017. 8 of my short films and 2 of my assistant directors have been embedded which will be a different experience to global audience. Mei (The Truth) independent anthology film has been screened close to 180 film festivals with 35 award winning status and still there are lookouts for screening venues in different countries. Second independent film was Chennai Diaries that was based on true events that happened in Chennai during 2015-2017. Chennai Diaries was described Journey of emotions that portray the reality in many of our lives that we may have come across.

# HARISH SUNDARAJAN

## Independent Film Maker

Chennai Diaries independent film is close to the 200 film festival mark and still in the requirement of many film festivals across the globe. Recent work is Nermarai (Be Positive) which is an environmental awareness short film which was shot during COVID situation is been screened in 30 film festivals and also participating in many competitive film festivals that are happening in 2021 worldwide.

As an independent film maker would love to experiment in different genres and expand the boundaries of independent film making. We have recently launched an OTT platform named Moviewud that is available for Android, IOS and desktop web users with the help of passionate friends in the industry. Moviewud creates a transparent revenue sharing model beyond languages and countries and focuses mainly on independent film makers that might be short, feature, stage plays, music albums. My works Mei (The Truth) Anthology film, Chennai Diaries independent film and short film Nermarai (Be Positive) is streaming in Moviewud.

Visit : [www.sharingstories.in](http://www.sharingstories.in)

# Reach Out to Sharing Stories for Your Book Promotion & Marketing

A simple line-art icon of a telephone handset, positioned to the left of the contact information.

[abilash@sharingstories.in](mailto:abilash@sharingstories.in)

**+91-9840888123**

# CHOSEN SPIRITS

## Dystopian

"Dystopia is pornographic, Olamina. You see it and shiver but it's also kind of fun because it's happening somewhere else, to someone else, you know? It requires distance. Some of us are actually sitting in the fucking middle of it and we may never learn to care in time. This isn't dystopia. This is reality."

Who would have thought that the times we live now would be so drastic from just a year ago, but it happened. Now imagine the same years of 2020, known in the future as "Years Not To Be Discussed" seems shocking isn't it? Samit Basu's *Chosen Spirits* is set 10 years in the future. Given the probability of artistic freedom and embellishment that's the backbone of any narrative, the story revolving around Joey and Rudra, feels something straight out of a movie. But it is not these characters that catch the reader's attention, it's the circumstances they face and the world they live in.

Samit Basu does not refer to his story as dystopia but as "best case scenario" and the argument makes sense. While dystopia has a world building concentrated on the elements derived out of worst case scenarios of our current reality like in the case of Margret Atwood's *The Handmaids Tale*, or George Orwell's *1984* and *Animal Farm*, what stands out in this book is the likelihood of Samit Basu's "best case scenario" becoming our future reality.

"They say they've seen all this before-the fear of speaking out, the fear of people around you, the fear that you'd wake up one morning to find you'd lost everything- no bank account, no citizenship, no job, no rights. It's fear they live with, just like the fear, in their twenties, of a terrorist bomb in every market, every empty car, back when terrorists and the government were on different sides. Letting this fear get to you, letting it dictate your actions, isolate you, leech away your life... those were the things they have learnt to overcome."

The above quotes ring a bell, don't they? The various aspects present in the book such as live streaming of people's lives, moral policing, scripted reality shows, secret surveillance, and economic disparity etc is the veracity of today's world. We know what goes on behind the veil, we adorn the garb of silence, then one day the veil is lifted and the force of cronyism is upon us; and there is no escape.

The coolest part of reading dystopia or sci-fi is the concept of gadgets that seem inconceivable to us today. Joey and Rudra's world is full of thingamajigs such as ad-drones, smart-washers, smart-glasses, decoder apps, AI virtual assistants and gamefeeds, all of which seem to make life easier for humans. However, the ugly reality behind the supposed scientifically advanced equipment comes at the cost of giving up control of our life and our privacy. In the book, Narad is a tattoo on your wrist that reads your mood and suggests solutions. There's the most important Flow that livestreams an influencer's whole life.



## Blurb

Bijoyini Roy, also goes by Joey is a reality controller for the Flow. She manages the account of her ex-boyfriend Indi Mathews. Though she is good at her job, she is constantly frustrated at the oppressive environment around her and guilty that she has to keep to herself because speaking up means disappearing from the face of the earth and more awful is seeing all the terrible things happening. But when she instinctively rescues Rudra, her childhood friend, from becoming a part of his wealthy family's comfortable yet horrific life in slave trade business, things are set in motion that will make her see all the terrible things she has been avoiding.

There are Augers, which are basically accountants of religion that track your good deeds, give you points which in turn decide how good or bad your future on Earth is going to be. They seem interesting but all these feed the personal data to the government who then sells it to third parties. This kind of scandal is something we are all too familiar with, there is an outrage, then comes assurance, and then it's life as usual while our data is still being sold.

While the technological advancements in the book are marvellous the author has retained the extremist elements from today's time. The world after 10 years is still the world of lynchings, terrorists, hackers, religious fanatics, sexual harassments, pogroms, pandemics, rape gangs, crowd sourced robberies, vandals from the culturally outraged, etc. only more brazen. The title of the book is borrowed from Mir Taqi Mir's poem about Delhi, composed in 1972- "where dwelt the chosen spirits of the age"— the city whose future is bleak and forever doomed to be desolate. The book is a dreary read only if you think it to be; it is just as thought provoking as it is depressing. For the sake of this review, I have refrained from talking about the characters because my intention is to focus on the world depicted in the book. Even character driven, the importance is found in the realisation that present or future, the grim times are upon us but there is hope, the fight is still alive and there will always be people standing for what is right. As Joey's mother wisely advises "stand your ground, and hold on, instead of running away."



# What our Community has to say....

## Deepti Menon

'Sharing Stories' is a title that has two of my favourite words put together. Sharing is caring and for a writer, what is more important than sharing her stories and finding a niche in the hearts of her readers.

In this context, Sharing Stories Team have been instrumental in giving writers space and support in their venture 'Sharing Stories' through their magazine and through their awards as well, especially during the pandemic. It is a pleasure to be associated with them, and I do wish 'Sharing Stories' all the best in the future. May they rise from strength to strength!

God bless!



## Alipi Das

'Sharing Stories' acted as a catharsis to my hunkered down spirits in these challenging times. It provided the much-needed space to writers for the outward revelation of their emotions. It helped to connect with the soulful stirrings and build bridges with various forms of art. Thank you so much for this remarkable journey, and the accolades bestowed on me. I hope to be a part of these fascinating rides in the future together.

Get Your Amazing

# ★ AUTHOR WEBSITE

Starting @ just 3000Rs\*

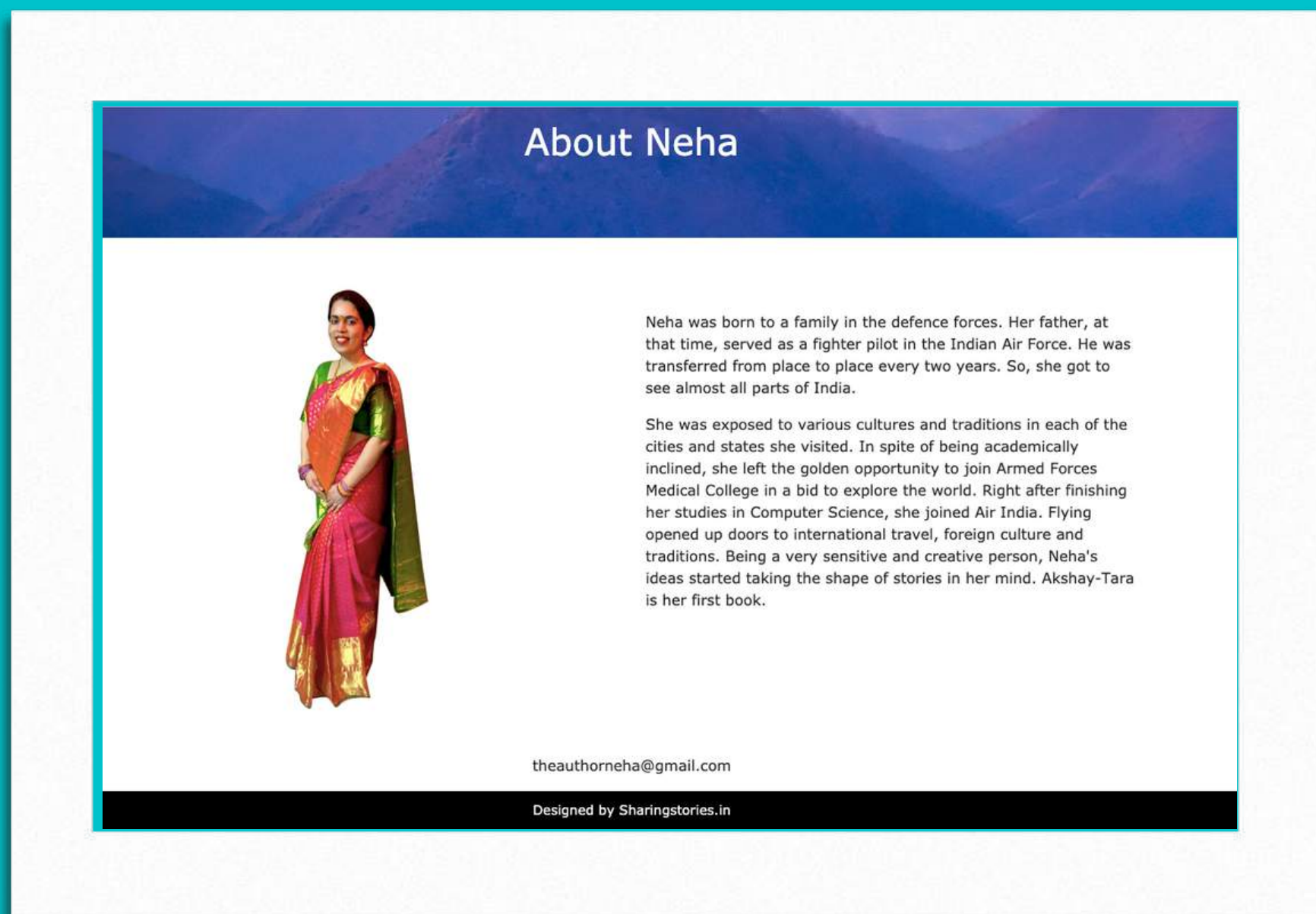
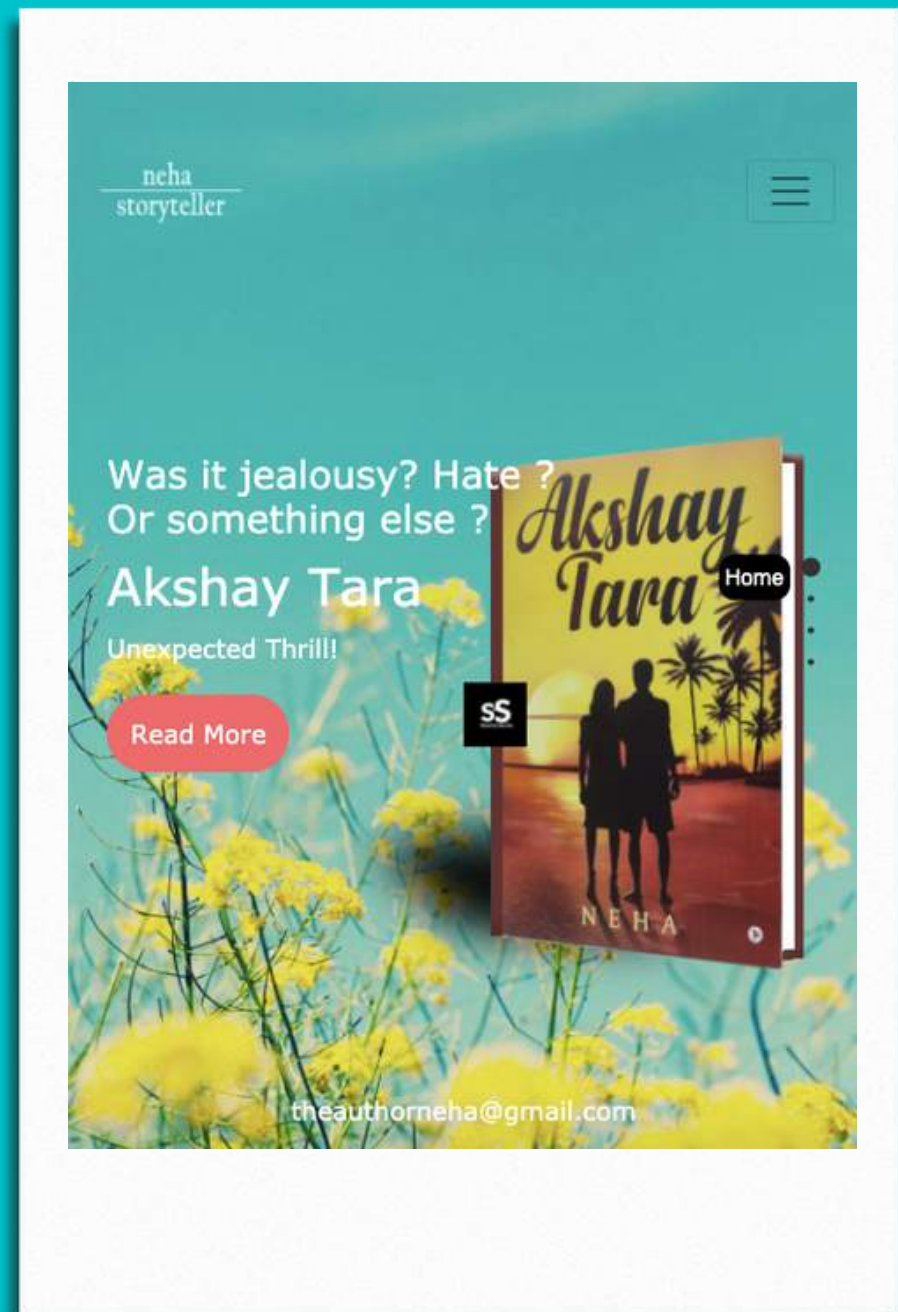
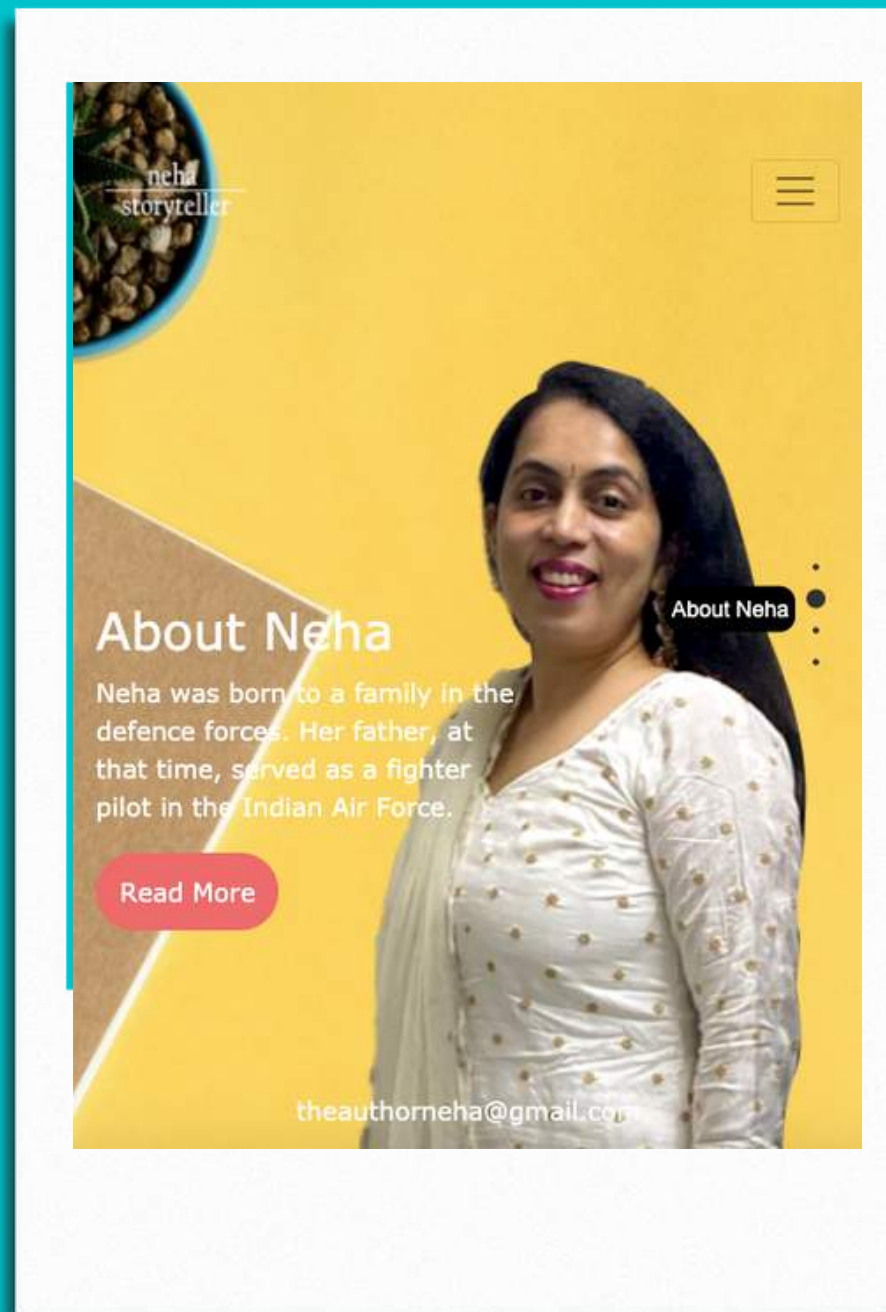
Why You need this?

**PERSONAL BRANDING**  
**DIGITAL AUTHORITY**  
**DRIVE TRAFFIC**

**Click Here for Demo Site  
of Manali Desai**

**9840888123**

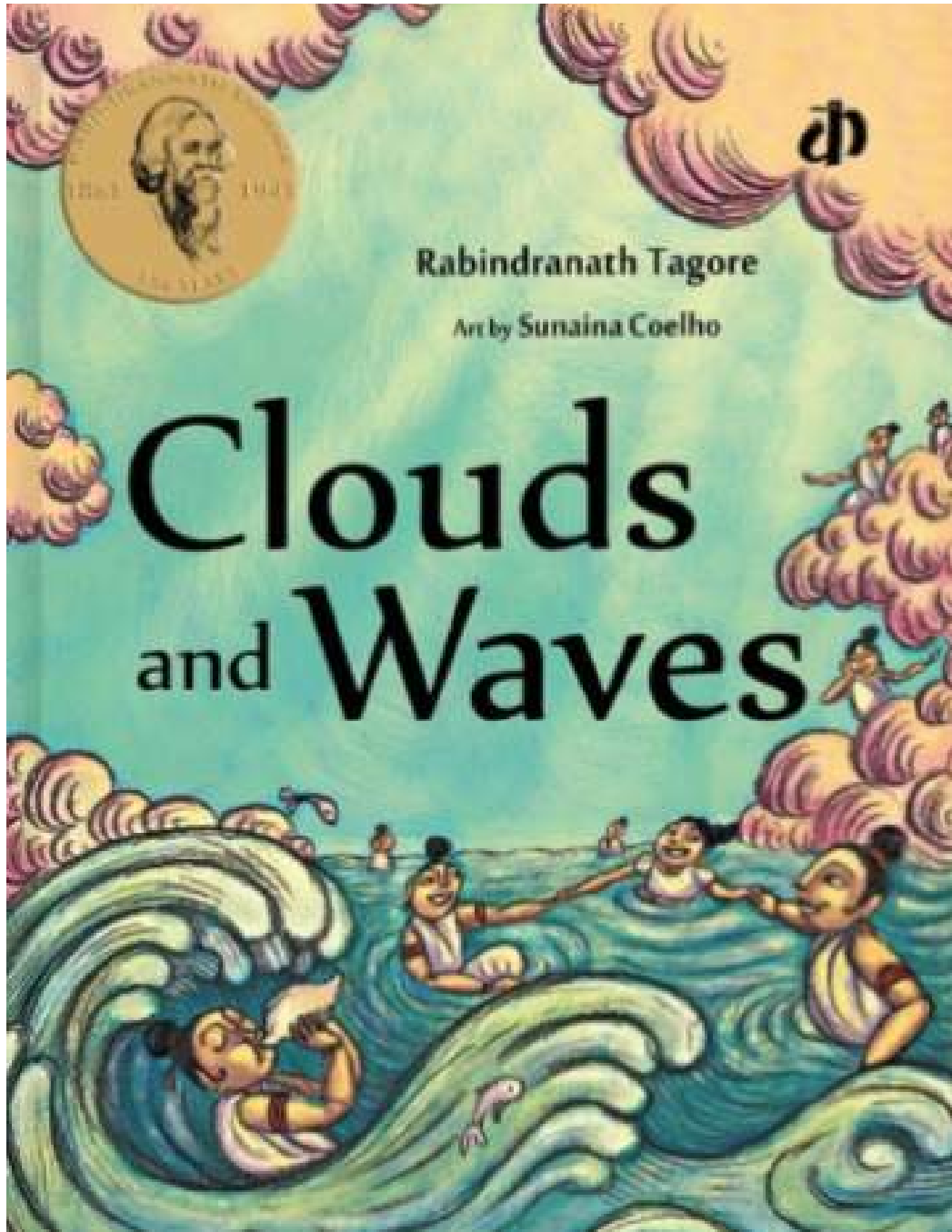
# Improve Your Personal Branding. Get Your AUTHOR WEBSITE Today.



Visit Now

+91-9840888123

Summer 2020



**Art by Sunaina Coelho**  
**Author : Rabindranath Tagore**

# "Clouds and Waves"

'Clouds and Waves' is a touching poem composed by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. In this poem a small child is showing her affection and care towards her mother. She refuses all the tempting invitations and chooses to stay with her mother and play games with her.

In this poem the child talks about her imagination about the clouds and waves and how people living on them are inviting her to play and have fun. But she knows that her mother is waiting and she needs to be with her.

She happily tells her mother that she can play better games in her lap and enjoy motherly love and care with lots of laughter.

'Clouds and Waves' by Katha introduces us to the great poet Rabindranath Tagore and his life. The book is designed with colorful art work and pictures. It also carries a family tree chart of Rabindranath Tagore which is very informative. Children will love to read this playful and lovely poem and relate to it too.

Read More...

**BY YASHAN GAJBE**  
**(9 YEARS OLD)**





# Did You Know ?

**"Some trivia, something serious but always interesting"- brought to you**

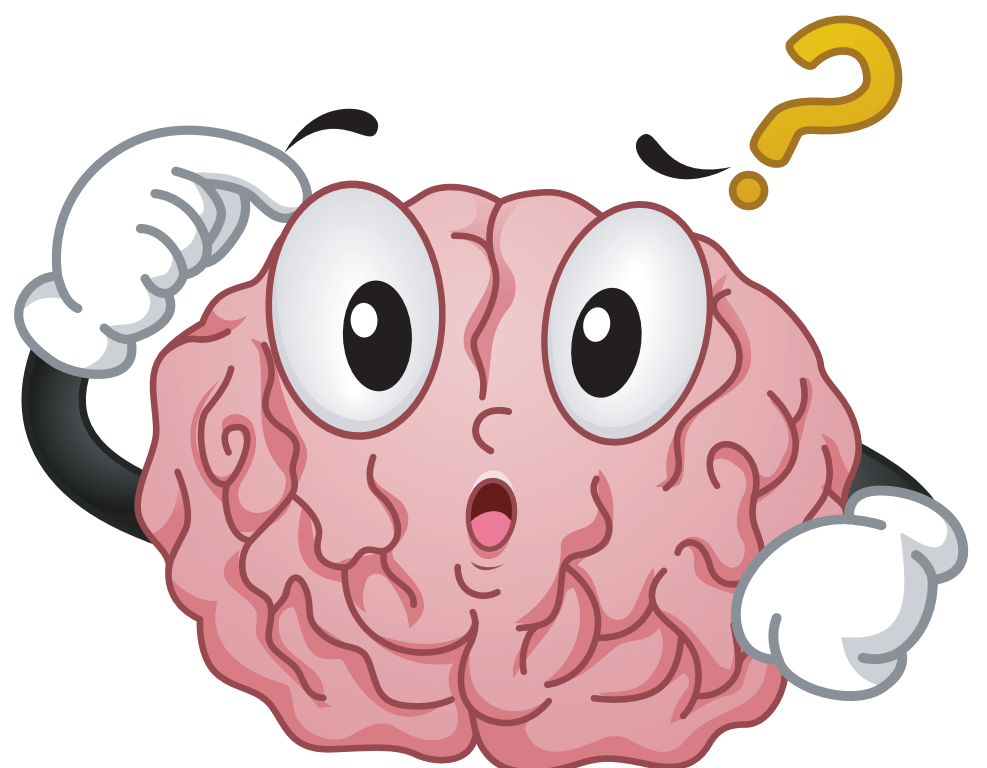
**by Chandrika R Krishnan**

- Consider the following terms: HIV Virus, ATM Machine, ABS Braking System, DC Comics, DC Current, DOS Operating System, and PIN number. These are all examples of Redundancies. Sometimes redundancies are so common we don't even think about them. Eggs Revert back.
- An anagram is made when you rearrange the letters from a word to make a new word. But, what is a pangram? It's a sentence containing all the letters of the alphabet. There are many pangrams. One of the more famous one is the following sentence: "A quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog."
- Did you know that a group of cats are clowder? A group of bears is a sleuth. A group of elks is a gang. Finally, a group of ponies is called a string. If anyone has ever heard hundreds of crows all making noise together, you know why it's called a murder of crows. And collective noun for Unicorn is called a blessing.
- Can a word be its own opposite? Yes, they are called Contronyms. Words that are their own antonyms depending on usage. For example: Dust can mean 'to add fine particles' and also 'to remove fine particles.'
- When scientists first saw specimens of platypus, an Australian mammal, they thought it was a hoax.
- The two cities in India which are on the UNESCO World Heritage list are Jaipur and Ahmedabad.
- We all have loved the characters Chacha Chaudhary and Pinki. Do you know the cartoonist who created them? Well, it was Pran..no not the 'Sher Khan' but Pran Kumar Sharma.

- Swami Vivekananda (12 January 1863 – 4 July 1902) said, "We are what our thoughts have made us; so take care about what you think. Words are secondary. Thoughts live; they travel far." We don't know what this great man said more than a century ago, but we do follow the latest life skills coach, don't we?
- The Indian costume designer who won an Oscar for her work on the film Gandhi in 1983 was Bhanu Athaiya. She worked on over 100 films, with Indian filmmakers such as Guru Dutt, Yash Chopra, B.R. Chopra, Raj Kapoor, Vijay Anand, Raj Khosla, and Ashutosh Gowariker; and international directors such Conrad Rooks and Richard Attenborough.
- After the 'Mona Lisa' was stolen from the Louvre in 1911, the famous artist Pablo Picasso was considered a suspect.



**Chandrika R Krishnan**



SHARING STORIES

# BOOK AWARDS 2020

120 + ENTRIES

RECEIVED

SHORTLISTING UNDER PROGRESS  
STAY CONNECTED IN OUR FB GROUP  
FOR UPDATES



# What our Community has to say....

## Natasha Sequeira

The year 2020 has been tough on a lot of folk, if not all. I ventured into Sharing Stories and found a cosy haven of amazingly talented writers and readers. The creators of Sharing Stories have taken care to keep the place warm, brimming with fun story and poetry challenges and all in all, one feels like Sharing Stories is our second home. Additionally, there are lots of worthy discussions that take place on the platform that are pertinent to today's children and youth. Three cheers for Sharing Stories as we step into the New Year, together.



## Richa Srivastava Mukherjee

Dreary and unnerving times rob most writers of joy and creativity; that are essential ingredients in their arsenal. This platform, with its prompts, motivational prods and a wonderful sense of community has invigorated many pens including mine. I wish Sharing Stories all the very best in the coming year.





**LET'S CELEBRATE**

**Contest Winners**

[www.sharingstories.in](http://www.sharingstories.in)



# WINNING ENTRIES

WRITING CONTESTS NOV'2020

## WORD IMPACT

### Ann Anniah - Winner

Preethi Warriar  
Chandra Sundeep  
Narayani Mandapam  
Ratna Prabha

## PICTURE PROMPT POETRY

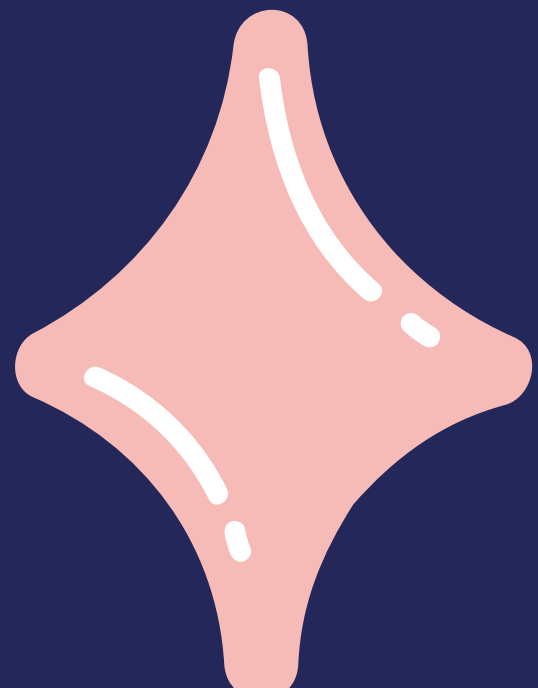
### Jayashree Pillai- Winner

Ratna Prabha  
Chandra Sundeep  
Sudha Vishwanath  
Anu Anniah

## #1000WORDS TALES

### Narayani Mandapam - Winner

Priya Mani  
Sreemati Sen



# What our Community has to say....

## Meera V. Barath

As the name goes, Sharing Stories is a community which has been enabling many Storytellers and Writers in shaping their thoughts into a beautiful outcome. An outcome which has been traveling through their quills in SS monthly e-magazine. Infact it has given that magic feet to many writers to share their stories and poems. And for us in LetsMakeStoriesDino it's a great collaboration with Sharing Stories. It's an opportunity for our Dino writers to walk their words into a story in this space. A space which provides space for all the writers and Storytellers.

And this is a collaboration we would always love to work with. Best wishes



## Nipun Varma

When the going got tough, way tougher than anything we imagined, all we needed was a single ray of light- a sliver of positivity that could help us keep going. For us, who had fallen head over heels in love with the magic of words, it was an opportunity to rekindle our passion- to be among words yet again. And Sharing Stories has been that beacon of inspiration that kept us going. A friendly nudge, a naughty poke, a warm round of applause- to keep us going, to help us sail through the stormy waters all the while rejuvenating us with the right doses of inspiration. For me, Sharing Stories is Sharing Smiles and Sharing Hopes.

It's great to have Sharing Stories around when the whole world is busy building walls.

# Procrastination.

*Goal - procrastinate about waking up*

Set the alarm

Snooze the alarm when it rings

Calculate how long it takes to get ready

Figure that you can sleep for 5 minutes more

Reset alarm

Snooze

Switch to Plan B - skip bath to save time

Recalculate time to get ready

Reset alarm

Snooze

Panic about having overslept

Another round of calculation about time required to get ready

Switch to Plan C - pack breakfast, eat in the cab

Another 10 minutes saved

Reset alarm

Wake up

Panic

Goal achieved - successfully delayed waking up by half an hour!



## ANU ANNIAH

Anu writes about a variety of things. Humor, poetry, travel, parenting, life, fiction, book reviews, Netflix series reviews, and so on.

# Picture Prompt Poetry

SS

WWW.SHARINGSTORIES.IN



*In the wildness of the storm  
when the echoes of drumbeats  
resonate in patterns  
that haunt my dreams,  
I wake up.*

*Troughs fill up with the  
dew drops  
of the fading night.  
The gnashes that pain has carved  
on my skin gleam in the dark.*

*My violin pleads - it has a song for me.  
I lift the bow  
and let the ache ooze  
through the open pores of my naked heart.*

*The shadows slink away in silence.  
The tune you had played floats in.*



## JAYASHREE PILLAI

Jayashree Pillai is a student and a teacher, who picks up fragments of life and weaves them into words. She enjoys nature, music and traveling. Her best moments are spent with her students, discussing Shakespeare, History and teaching them to dream.



# #1000wordstales

## Second Chance

WWW.SHARINGSTORIES.IN

#1000WordsTales



### Situation :

Given a chance to choose a next life, how would you live it? Is there something you want to start afresh, or want to change something about yourself?

## DIALOGUE WITH DEATH

I sense some bustling activities around me. My chest feels like someone has placed a kilogram of lead over it. I try to inhale. Oh God! Why do I have the feeling that I am sinking deep under the sea? I feel a hand checking my pulse. The beeps of the ECG are getting to my nerves now! What's happening? I want to ask the nurse, but my throat is dry!

ICU. That dreaded word makes my heart do a somersault. Will I be wheeled into an intensive care unit? And then – the reality hits me in my face. The naked truth about mortality. Oh come on, I argue with myself. So many patients recover from serious illnesses. Also from Covid-19. Right? I mean, I have read reports of elderly people kicking this virus in the rear and emerging victorious. And I am just thirty.

The nurse leaves. I see a thin ray of light penetrating through the shutter of the bedside window. It is as if the sun has decided to embark on a nocturnal rendezvous with the moon. Wow! Can one be poetic even in a hospital? The light falls on the ground, and a mild ripple erupts on the tile. As though someone has flung a pebble on a stagnant lake. This is a dream, I convince myself.

## WINNING ENTRIES

The floor cracks. Slowly. Noiselessly. A white vapour whirls out of the gap, and a man with a white beard appears, almost like an apparition. Do you know how death looks like? Is it like what they show in films? A skeletal form – with a hoodie. And a broomstick. Oh wait! That's for witches.

"Give me another chance, God!" I cry out aloud, "I don't want to die now."

A caress on my forehead startles me. I know this touch very well. It belonged to Sudha – my girl. I am reminded of those magical nights. I raise my hand, but she is gone. Again. Leaving me to fend for myself.

"Come, son. It's time to go!" a soft voice prods me. It's the man. Who is he? As if reading my thoughts, he smiles, "I am Death."

I guffaw, "I am Napoleon Bonaparte." Wow, even in these times I have not lost my sense of humour. If only I could pat myself in the back!

He glides towards me. Wait! What? It cannot be true. I burst into tears. I live my life on my own terms, I used to boast to my friends. But now! Isolated in a hospital room. Covid-19 is indeed a great leveler.

My eyes scan the man. I finally muster up courage to ask him, "So will I be fried in oil? Or thrown to the wolves?"

The man bursts into laughter. "I see you have been watching too much movies."

"You see, I am not exactly an epitome of virtue." My thoughts race back to Sudha. And that boy. What was his name? Ahh! Chintu.

"It's not my job to punish you. But tell me something, if you had a second chance, what would you do?"

## WINNING ENTRIES

**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.**

I pause. Even a notebook will not suffice to chronicle my misdeeds. "For starters, I have been extremely cruel to Sudha. You know her, right? We were together for two years. And then she ended it. Just like that. Or so, I thought. Which sane girl would have tolerated my barbs?"

A cough interrupts my speech. It's the old lady next to me. I think her time is up too. Weirdly she doesn't seem to be disturbed by my speech. Can she see Death too?

I continue, "I didn't even try to stop her. I watched her leave."

Death says nothing but prods me to continue.

Tears well up. "I was driving home. Yeah, I know. I have had quite a few pegs. My vision was getting blurry. And I didn't see the little boy on the road."

Death's eyebrows arch up.

I bite my tongue. "Sorry. I forgot this is not a police station. Ok! The child was sleeping on the footpath."

"You didn't even bother to call up an ambulance!"

"I was scared – you know, police case and stuff like that. That's why I lied to the police."

Death says nothing. He stares at me for a long second. He stretches his right hand towards me.

And then it strikes me – the sheer mortality. I realise my father will never see me again. I fall on my knees and bring my hands together. "Oh God! Just give me another chance. Let me say sorry to Sudha. And Chintu! Darn! I cannot bring him back to life. But I can surrender myself to the police and serve my sentence. Let me atone for my sins."

I bend down and my forehead touches the ground.

I feel a noose around my neck. It's tightening. I look up.

The benign smile of Death has been replaced by a sinister grin. The gleam in his eyes is devilish. I scream.

Nobody comes to my rescue. The old lady

stares through me. Something is amiss! On an

impulse, I run to my bed. And stop in my tracks. I see

a young man on the bed. He is sleeping blissfully –

without a care in the world. Of course, there is

nothing to disturb him. The ECG shows a straight line.

I turn around. "So you killed me, right?"

"I came to take you away. You were already dead."

Visions of Sudha and Chintu flash before me. I have

wronged them. And I have been served my

punishment – I was not given a chance to repent. I

wipe a tear from my eyes. Do ghosts cry? Maybe. I

smile at Death. "Let's go."



# What our Community has to say....

## Khyrunnisa A

'Sharing Stories' is the perfect title for this unique platform. At a time when the pandemic closed so many doors, 'Sharing Stories' shared stories that opened up delightful windows to a variety of healthy outlets with its book reviews, interviews, writing contests and meaningful articles and poems presenting different perspectives on life. I am very happy to have been a part of 'Sharing Stories' and I wish it all the best. Khyrunnisa A. Author of 'Tongue in Cheek: The Funny Side of Life' and the Butterfingers series



## GIVEAWAY ALERT December Edition

### The Masks And Other Poems

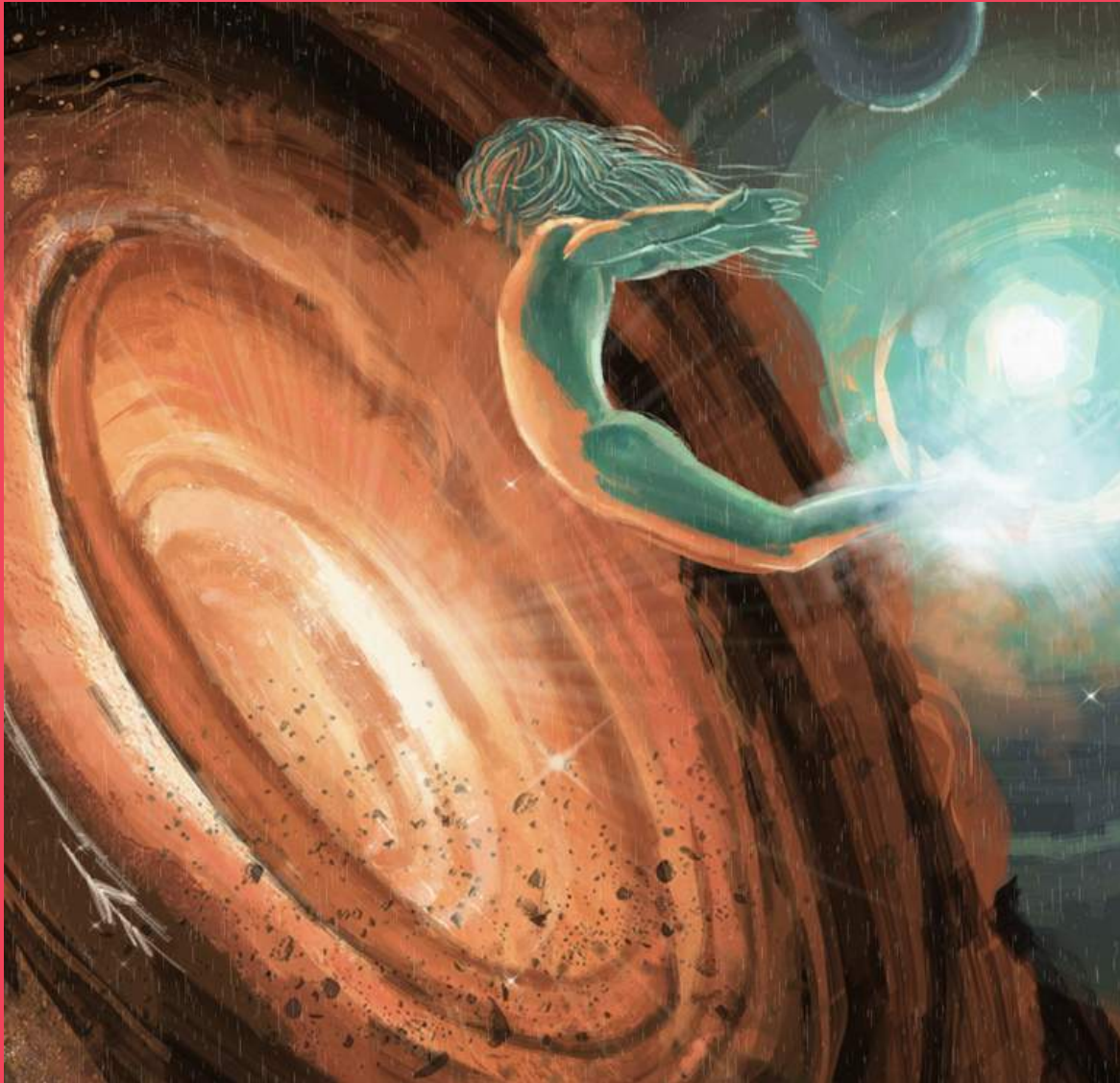


Vasudha Pansare

# Creative Contest

## Win Exciting Prizes

Worth  
**60,000RS\***  
this season



**1.**

## Picture Prompt Poetry

Painting Courtesy : Anjid

SS  
Sharing Stories

## Word Impact Series

# "HORIZON"

"Our brightest dreams and our greatest fears are just over the horizon."

~ Kent Nerburn

As we are at the threshold of the wrapping up the year 2020 and step into a brand new 2021, the two words – past and future are creating a horizon. Interpret the word 'Horizon' with your own creative juices and weave some magic in 100 words.

**3.**

**#1000**

## WordsTales

**'Oh! How do I say a 'goodbye' to you?'**

Write a 1000 words story in any genre and place this dialogue at any point within your story.

You can interpret the prompt in whatever way you like; it can be even placed in an animated form too. You have got the freedom to showcase your creativity with the prompt.

**Click Here to Participate**

Visit : [www.sharingstories.in](http://www.sharingstories.in)

# Reach Out to Sharing Stories for Your Book Promotion & Marketing



[abilash@sharingstories.in](mailto:abilash@sharingstories.in)  
**+91-9840888123**

---

# HARMONY THROUGH WRITING

---

Spend 15 mins every day writing, de-cluttering your thoughts and start your journey inwards through the art of writing.

**CLICK TO VISIT**  
**WWW.SHARINGSTORIES.IN**

**Disclaimer :** Sharing stories is only a marketing platform that display the writing submitted by various content writers, and, hence, do not take any ownership for the content published in the magazine or our website. The content published here are expected to be the original work (content) of the participants. Sharing stories and its associated team shall NOT take any legal or non-legal responsibilities that may arise due to any copyrights or intellectual property rights related issue on the content published. Any such issue that may arise shall be dealt directly by the person who has shared the content with sharing stories.