

SS

Sharing Stories

World Harmony through Writing

SHARING STORIES

March 2021

DEEPTI

NAVAL

PERCEPTIVE
WRITER &
A BRILLIANT
ACTRESS

INTERVIEWS

Raina Khatri Tandon
Dr. Saumya Goyal
Shilpa
Fawaz Jaleel

**WOMEN'S
DAY
EDITION**

**Let's
Empower
Our Kids**

COLLABS

&KATHA ORG

#LETSMAKESTORIESDINO

@BOOKSCHARMING

#DURGA-NGO

An Initiative by Sharing Stories

EDITOR'S DESK

It was the month of International Women's Day. I witnessed a lot of celebration of womanhood around me, on various social media platforms and channels. Women's Day Sales and discount offers rained in my inbox. It made me more about the way 'women and their existence' is celebrated in society around us.

I am glad that people show their respect and love for the female population of the world on this particular day. However, that leaves me with a more serious question does society understand what a woman wants in her life?

Each woman is a distinct individual on this planet. Some might be having aspirations to fly a plane or someone else might want to bake perfect chocolate chip cookies. Here comes the 'choice' and the power to make choice. Has society given the women folk the right to make choices yet?

A larger part of the women population is still living under the rule of patriarchy. Somebody else decides what a woman should wear, what kind of education and career choices she should make, whom to marry and where to live. All her choices are dictated by someone else's authority. The ones who follow these lines set by societal rules are put on a pedestal.

Women don't want to be worshipped. They want to be understood. They don't even want special treatment by virtue of being a woman. What women need is to be identified as individual human beings who have dreams, aspirations and who have the freedom to make choices of their own.

In this Women's Day Special edition, we bring to you some powerful women personalities who have made their choices, lived their dreams and broken the glass ceiling.

Actress and author Deepti Naval graces this month's cover page. Her dedication to her art form is inspiring. Her sensitivity and empathetic heart come out on the pages in her book through her words. She had always made her choice and lived them with conviction.

Raina Khatri Tandon shows us how to dream and turn them into reality. Full of energy and good vibes, she is one superwoman. We have Dr Somya Goyal and poetess Shilpa, who followed their passion. Author Fawaz Jaleel brings out a different perspective about feminism in his stories. The world around us needs harmony and harmony comes when each component in this Universe balances the other. Similarly, the genders should balance each other. I am talking about genders, and not just men and women. Humanity is a lot more than male-female. We must include the third gender too. I feel more than the celebration of Women's day, what we need is a celebration of Humanity, the celebration of equality and freedom.

We don't need sales and offers to feel celebrated. We shall be touched if people stop spreading sexist and misogynist jokes and be more sensitive towards women. We shall be grateful if people stop passing judgments on the choices women make regarding their life and career. Women shall feel more understood if they are not put on a pedestal for being a mother. Motherhood is a natural phenomenon and a precious emotion. Let it be a woman's choice if she wants to embrace motherhood or wants to remain childfree. Society should stop treating motherhood as a badge of honour.

Sharing Stories has the tagline, 'Humanity Through Writing' and humanity is all we believe in.

I am glad that all our readers and members have always shown their faith in our motto. With each edition, we try to take this one step forward.

And trust me, when you read this edition, you will find this essence of Sharing Stories on each page, loud and clear.

Heartfelt thanks,

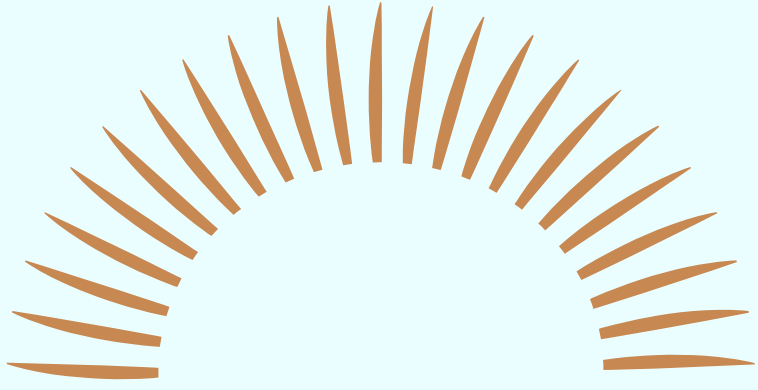
Happy reading and Blissful writing!

Piya Gajbe



SHARING KNOWLEDGE

BEYOND LIFE



Sharing Stories has always aimed at spreading Humanity! We do this through our campaigns & contests, interviews with authors, filmmakers, screenwriters, lyricists and finally with the uplifting content.

We at Sharing Stories strongly believe in SHARING KNOWLEDGE BEYOND LIFE...

In life, each one of us has unique yet different experiences. Hence, we want each one of you to share the knowledge and experiences you have gained over the years that can stand the test of time and benefit humanity for eternity.

Sharing Stories has devised a simple yet powerful means to achieve sharing Knowledge beyond life through our campaign "World Harmony Through Writing" We urge our community members to spend 10-15 minutes every day writing the thoughts that clog their mind. Over a period of time, this helps you to de-clutter your thoughts and bring a lot of clarity to your life. Now, Imagine if the entire world does this...The world would be a better place to be in.

How can we do this?

We are upgraded to Version 2.0 with our User Generated Content (UGC) Simply visit www.sharingstories.in>contest>unprompted and 'Write Your Heart Out'.

Let us all support each other and be good listeners. We invite you to write your heart out without having the worry of being judged.

If you don't reflect on this idea, no Issues, we have something else for you.

Each one of us has at least one social cause which we deeply believe in. For us, we strongly believe in our campaign, 'Let's Empower Our Children' (#EmpoweringOurKids). Bring the knowledge of life lessons to children that can make them better individuals for tomorrow. Teaching them not just career-oriented topics, but also things like empathy, sympathy, kindness, love, compassion and the basic values of human life.

We urge you to pick up one social cause to which you can relate and create awareness regarding this, through the sharing stories platform. Come write your heart out and we shall take it to the world. Follow the same steps as above for participation.

Start Caring, Start Sharing!



-Abilash Geetha Balan
Let's Spread Humanity





INTERVIEWS

Deepti Naval- Writer & Actor
Raina Khatri - Entrepreneur and Mentor
Dr. Saumya Goyal - Author
Shilpa - Author
Fawaz Jaleel-Author



PARTNERSHIPS

@Children's Book by Katha
@Durga- NGO
@Book Review by Aakanksha Jain(www.bookscharming.com)
@Unprompted by #LetsmakestoriesDino



LOVE FOR LITERATURE

Wordsmith Corner by Piya Gajbe
Did You Know by Chandrika



CONTESTS & GIVEAWAYS

Winning Entries February
Contest Prompt March



FINDING SOLUTIONS

Parul Agrawal



SHARING STORIES FAMILY

Geetika K Bakshi- Featured Poetry
Tanushree Ghosh- Featured Article
Piya Gajbe- Featured Story

HAPPY
WOMEN'S
DAY



DEEPTI

NAUVAL

As a painter and a writer, you seem to be innately observant. Being a highly dedicated actress, how did you manage to pick up your stories in between the tight schedules of your work? Did you jot down the stories in bit and pieces and later worked on them to present them in this mesmerizing collection 'The Mad Tibetan?'

First of all, I feel when you think about writing a book, it is something you don't decide instantaneously whether it is going to be a romantic novel or short stories collection. It is a matter of your own choice that takes time. When I decided on writing the book, 'The Mad Tibetan', I thought that I do have a couple of stories to share with the world outside.

'Thulli' was the first story that I wrote. 'Thulli' was already there in the form of jottings in my diary. It was an autobiographical account. I visited the red-light area of Kamathipura for doing a bit of research for my role in a film. I was accompanied by my director and another colleague. There were scribbling and points about it in my diary.

I and my publisher were in discussion about doing a book for a long time. However, we never zeroed upon what kind of book it would be. Earlier, I thought that my publisher wanted an autobiographical kind of thing to be done. But then she insisted that for the moment autobiography could wait for some more time, as autobiographical work required a lot more time and detail. That's when she suggested to me about writing some short stories which could be quick...

I had a huge amount of poems lying around, unpublished. But I had not written a short story ever. I pondered upon and recollected the events which I wanted to narrate as stories. I made a list of incidents that could be turned into some interesting short stories. 'Birds' is one story that is completely lifted from my diary. It is even written in that manner, just like a diary piece. And then there were a couple of incidents narrated by my friends.

'Sisters' was narrated by a friend. It was her childhood experience and I decided to write it down in the form of a story. Then 'Premonition' was an experience which an assistant director shared with me.

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How in a backhanded manner the tragedy happens when it has to happen. He gives up one bus and boards another one out of fear of a premonition of an accident. Yet, it is the second bus that falls in the river. It was an eerie experience and I picked it up.

I could relate to these incidents. 'Sisters' is placed in Jugindernagar, Palampur, which I could relate to. Only one story, 'Morning After' is purely fictional. Ruth Mayberry was a close friend of mine. I wrote about her life in a short story. She used to discuss her script with me. In Manhattan, we would go to this fancy bar and she would tell me about her experiences with the producers. I remembered her words vividly how frustrated she felt when two young men would constantly say 'awesome' while listening to her screenplay.

Once I decided, I started with five-six stories. The rest of the stories were gradually developed. 'D' is another autobiographical incident. Daman was an old friend and I couldn't figure out her name at that moment in the middle of Janpath in Delhi. So these incidents got converted into stories.

I made little jottings. I wrote mostly by remembering. I strongly visualize while writing. It's not simply a narration for me. For me, it is seeing through the words. The friends who shared the incidents, I visualized the whole thing.

For Thulli, I wanted to take the reader with me and see everything. I had to do a lot more work on Thulli. I revisited the place with Tanvir, the movie director with whom I had gone there earlier. I had to jot down lanes, cinema hall, road, Dilli Durbar. The cages were not there anymore. The cages existed in the '80s during my earlier visit. The memory is still vivid in my mind. And I put all of it in my story.

Notes help a lot. Sometimes a single line can be a whole story. The Morning After is a three-line story. A woman goes to give the due to the illegitimate child of her husband and comes back with a child for herself.

So this is the way the whole collection, 'The Mad Tibetan' was done.

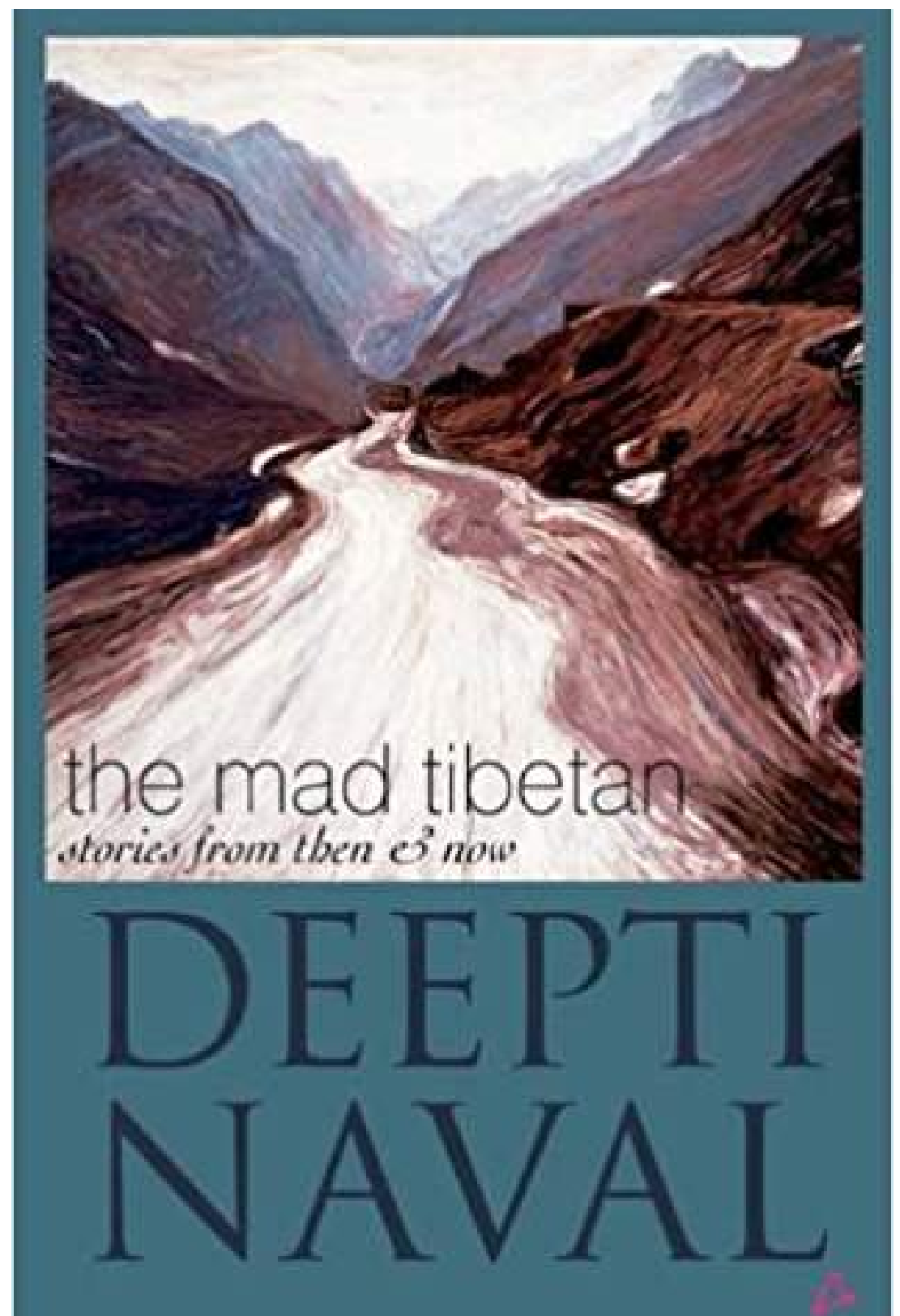
Each story of yours in 'The Mad Tibetan' stands out for itself. Why you particularly chose the story 'The Mad Tibetan' as the title of the collection?

Every story in 'The Mad Tibetan' has a different environment. I see the mad Tibetan as somebody who has got nothing, yet he lives joyously. He lights matchsticks in blizzards. He would be lying low erstwhile, and as soon as the storm struck he would light match sticks in the winds...like for him it was a sheer delight to keep on hanging against the wind with the spirit - 'See here I am again.'

I was overwhelmed by this spirit of his.

It was this madness in him that got me. There was a joy in his mere existence. I was the photographer and he was my subject and he got this very soon. He was smart in that sense. I used to be scared of noises that he made during the night hours. Making all kinds of weird noises out of the old tin boxes. For once, I thought the place was haunted. As I used to come out and look around, I would find him sitting outside the window, peacefully.

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LESSER KNOWN FACTS ABOUT DEEPTI NAVAL

Deepti acquired her Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts studying Painting as her major subject and English and Psychology for minors. Her interest in a whole range of other subjects led her to study American Theater, Photography, and Astronomy.

Here he was, sitting with a smile on his face. Looking at his innocence I realized here is a man who lives with the whole of joy and spirit amidst nothing. That 'mad Tibetan' stood out in my mind and became the title.

Your stories tend to showcase the delicate threads of a relationship without even being preachy. Be it, 'The sisters' which depicts the plights of a difficult childhood, or 'The Morning After' which has the essence of acceptance, 'D' which describes overwhelming helplessness. Are these inspired by real-life persons? As a story-writer, should one maintain a detachment towards the character that he/she weaves or should try to get totally immersed in the emotions that a character goes through?

I don't see how technically the writers are advised to write. I cannot write unless I put myself into it. I write after putting myself into the feeling. For example, in Thulli, I had to put myself into the mindset of hers. She was the 'madame of the brothel there and I was a new actress doing some research. Suddenly a big fat pimp arrived, who was in an intoxicated state. Thulli was trying to turn around her relationship with this pimp to save this young girl, which was me. I was trying to escape. She was trying to coax him away from me. She is ready to give herself to him.

Thulli in Nepali means 'didi', elderly sister. But at that moment she was ready to go to any length to save this young actress who had come to do some research for a role.

I had to go through all the feelings of the desperation of Thulli in those moments to write down the whole experience. So, I must say, I write by deeply getting into the story and the feelings. That's the only way I can write.

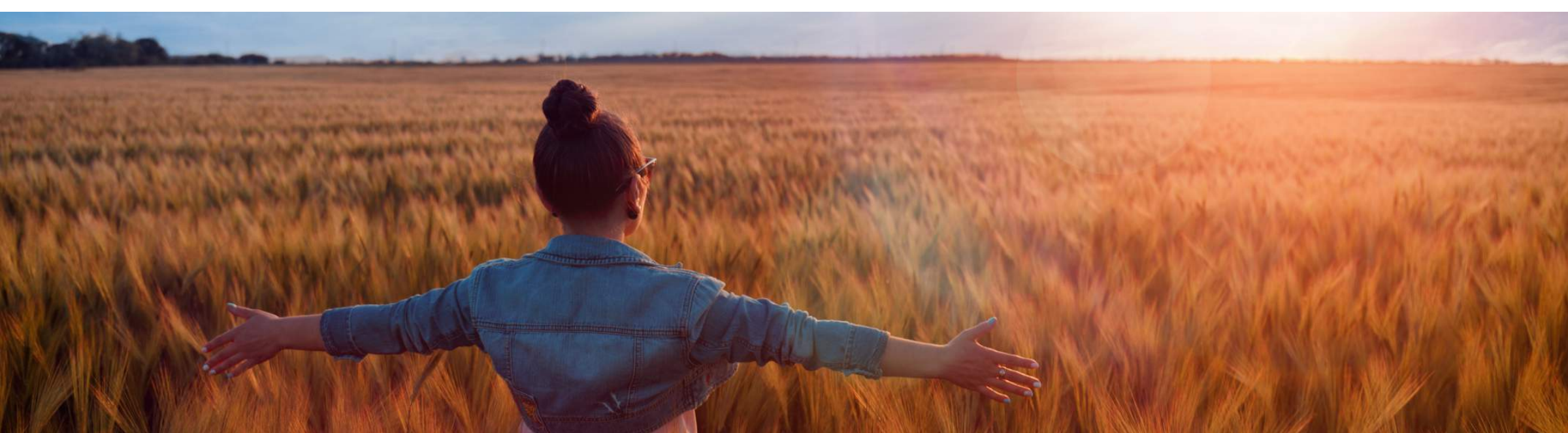
'Thulli' is a story that moves the readers to the core. While researching for the role of a prostitute, you went ahead to explore the dark realities of Kamathipura and other red-light areas. Did the experience drain you emotionally and writing it down helped?

Yes, indeed. Writing it down gave a sense of relief. Whenever you go through an experience, especially a difficult one, there is always a burden that you carry along with yourself. And when you finally share that experience with someone, the burden is relieved. Thus, writing down 'Thulli' was cathartic for me.

Writing is sometimes the art of offloading. The experience which you went through... you can share it with people outside. A story that needs to be told is now out there in a written form. People read it, sometimes they relate to it on a personal level. It gives another perspective to it. When other people are resonating with your written words, it is the finale of the story.

The whole process of writing is healing, therapeutic and cathartic. In the case of Thulli, I can say that writing it down gave it a proper closure.

You are truly an artistic soul. You have expressed yourself through the medium of paintings, photography, cinema, screenplay-writing, director and writing. Which medium is closest to your heart and gives you unbiased liberty to open up the deepest chords of your thought process and emotions?



It is writing, of course. Writing is closest to my heart. Because writing is my solo work. It comes out solely from my mind. If people relate to it, it is a direct connection with me as a person. The writer is the real you. The one you are, the things you feel and observe as a person. I am glad that my writing is getting recognized now.

Earlier, it was like...oh the actress who also paints and writes. But because of this larger image as an actress in front of the camera, it takes you over, the real person gets hidden behind. The writer in me got overshadowed by my acting career.

In the process of moviemaking, a lot of people are involved. There are directors, dialogue writers, musicians, makeup artistes etc. The whole movie is recognized as a collective effort.

As a writer, you have only yourself. The relationship with the reader becomes more intimate.

There is no one else between you and your reader. Writing is something that definitely resonates with me as a creative person.

You have portrayed some of the most challenging and pathbreaking female characters in your movies, for example, 'Chirutha', 'EkBaarPhir, 'Ankahi'. For 'Ankahi', to study the role you even went to an extent of staying and spending time with inmates of a women's mental asylum for 23 days. Your published collection; 'Black Wind' has some poems which have reflections of your stay and experience. In your afterword you have quite poignantly mentioned how this experience altered your perceptions, and also a line - 'Madness was addictive' regarding these inmates. Can you please share a bit about the experience with our readers?

Yes, I stayed there and did my homework for the role. Initially, I decided to go and stay there only for two to three days for the study of the role and my homework. However, it extended to weeks.

I ended up spending around more than three weeks. But the extension did not happen only for the role in the movie. During my stay there, I started writing another script altogether. That made my stay go on and on. I didn't feel like coming out of there. The reason being, the amount of sensitivity I could feel in there.

Everyone over there seemed to be super-sensitive and very real, far away from the drama and superficiality of the outer world. There was a different kind of emotional depth in there. I used to miss this depth and sensitivity in the outside world. The inmates made me see a totally different perspective of life.

I am not glorifying the mental ailments. I know people out there are suffering and going through a miserable life. They need medical attention and treatment. However, the real world is highly insensitive. People are running around after materialism.

This sensitivity drew me towards the asylum study intensely and hence the line, 'Madness is Addictive'.

Though the script I wrote there never saw the light of the day. It was deemed too dark as a subject. But I want to do something with it. I am surely going to do some work on it...Maybe a book or a movie.

In the collection, 'Black Wind', one particular poem - 'The Lunatic Is Out on The Wall' depicts the raw pain, grief and plight of a woman who suffers in a mental asylum. What was the trigger factor behind writing this poem? Do you feel that life for these inmates can ever be normal or stigma-free even if they are cured or taken back by their family?



Yes, during my stay in the asylum, I have witnessed some really gory things. I have seen women who were not in their senses; they were drugged and given electric shocks.

One night, when I was in the staff quarter, that's where I used to stay, I was unable to sleep. Suddenly I saw some movements. Generally during the nights, the inmates are locked inside and aren't allowed to move around. I saw a woman being dragged and taken around at the far end of the wall. She was not in her senses and I could well imagine what plight she might have undergone. These kinds of incidents made me feel their pain and trauma intensely and triggered me to write this poem in two parts - 'The Lunatic Is Out On the Wall I & II.

These inmates are stigmatized for life and from close quarters, I have seen that nobody wants them back, even if they are cured. There was one girl, who was treated and sent back home. But soon she was back in the mental hospital in much worse condition. At home, she was tortured and never allowed to forget her past. She was never accepted as a normal member of the family or society.

I have seen a lot during my stay. I have lived with the plight which they undergo. Our society is yet to accept mental disorders as any other health issue. People around these women stamp them as 'mad, crazy and lunatic' for life.

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I have also seen that some women are sent by the family members if they find the girl or woman a burden.



If a husband wants to marry another woman, he would conveniently get a medical certificate of the lunacy of the woman and throw her out. There have been cases where girls have been sent there as they couldn't fulfil the demand of dowry. All this moved me to the core.

We need to make people aware of mental health. There has to be a spread of literacy around this topic. This is what I am talking about in the era of the 80s. Sadly, I don't see much change to this date.

In the foreword to your poetry collection, 'Lamha- Lamha', Gulzaarji mentions that he can find two Deepti Naval while reading the poems; one Deepti is observing the other with a detached state of mind and after a point, these two merge to form a perfect picture. Do you perceive your poems as an extension of yourself or they are a separated entity in themselves?

'Lamha- Lamha', I can say is a phase of my life... a young poetess within me who had romantic ideas about life. It is that kind of phase when there is a romanticism about loneliness too.

As a person, I hadn't confronted the hard realities then, yet somehow drew imaginary ideas about deep philosophies of life. It was a beautiful phase of writing. There was a lot of romance about life... like dil bhi tutata tha; lekin farziwala. And I was able to write about those romantic ideas and hard-hitting realities which I was yet to face.

But again, such romanticism shows how fine-tuned you are about life. I have always lived life in depth. From the very beginning, I used to feel and observe things around me deeply. Maybe, I was born with this acute sensitivity. Now, I see life in two phases, Lamha- Lamha where I penned my feelings about how life could be. But, when life actually happened, I realized the realities are way different from my ideas. This maturity culminated in my later collection, 'The Black Winds.'

There is another collection that is under publication -'River and I' which defines this thought perfectly. This collection is deeper, introspective, kind of looking back and analyzing the varied experiences of life. Like, when you have come out of all the ups and downs and disturbances and look at the complete picture from a distance. It gives better clarity. There you are ready to sum it up all.

Which is your favourite poem from 'Lamha-Lamha'. Please share a bit of background about it.

Yes, there are some of the poems in Lamha-Lamha that are really close to my heart. In fact, the very first poem of the collection, 'Chalo Door tak' is a personal favourite.

Another poem that I wrote back then, stands still very much relevant today. It is, 'Pooch baiththa hai koi jab'. It is a Nazm that I wrote addressing the people belonging to all religions. It is addressed to human beings. It is sad to see that religion is something that has been turned into a weapon these days.



And that's why I feel that this poem is relevant even today. Though, I am disappointed that it is relevant even after so many years. Things haven't really changed or have gone to worse, if I may say so.

Registhan ki Raat hai is another favourite. The part of 'Lamha- Lamha' titled as 'Yaha se Naggar Tak' is close to my heart. It describes the beauty and peace of mountains, which I have made my abode nowadays. The places around Naggar- Kasol, the poems depict the serenity of this area and local flavour too.

We would love to know more about you as Deepti Naval as a person in real life. Can you describe/outline your typical day? Please tell us something about your likes dislikes.

I am an early riser and I live a real simple life. I can say that there is nothing dramatic about DeeptiNaval's daily life.

I wake up around 5.00AM. Earlier it used to be 4.00 AM. I have now pushed it one hour later. The first thing in the morning I need is my 'chai'.

With a cup of tea, I write for the next couple of hours. Since I am working on something, these days my morning hours are mostly spent in writing.

Around a quarter to seven, I go for a brisk walk at Silver beach, Juhu which is near to my home. When I am staying in mountains, I spend this time in Deodar forest, walking amidst the pine trees.

On some days, I carry my laptop with me to the beach. There is a coffee shop called 'Silver Beach café' which opens around 7.00 am. I go and sit there writing and have my breakfast too.

After my walk, it's time for breakfast at home and some exercise. During day time either I am writing or on a shoot. In between the shots, I am inside my vanity van typing on my laptop and writing. Most people use these breaks to chit chat and relax a bit. I prefer using this time to write.

I do enjoy my time with some of my close friends. My life runs between Mumbai, Himachal and New York. I live in between these three places. I go out with my friends for quiet dinners and quality time.

I avoid crowded places. I try to find places where lots of people don't come. Hence I can be spotted mostly in quiet restaurants or café.

LESSER KNOWN FACTS ABOUT DEEPTI NAVAL

Apart from being an accomplished actor, Deepti has written and directed THODASA AASMAAN (A handful of Sky), a woman-centric 14 part TV serial, about three women protagonists



For entertainment, I watch Netflix. Though, I am not much into movies or TV serials. I love watching documentaries. The subjects which raise the curiosity in me, I search them and watch documentaries about them. Also these days, I am listening to audiobooks. I try to multitask. Like what more can I do at the same time?

Like I do my singing riyaz while taking a walk.

I cherish my 'me-time'. I do my own stuff and don't like to be dependent on others. People who stay in my building can see me driving my own vehicle. I am very much addicted to my own space.

At times, if I am awake around 3 .00 AM, I visit Mount Mary in Mumbai on my own. Take some deep breath standing over there. There is a chai wala with the typical steel wall dabba over there. I would go and have a cup of tea peacefully.

This is the way I enjoy spending my own time. My own quiet time is very important to me.

With the advancement of technology and social media, the taste of people regarding the cinema and its content is rapidly changing. What is your message to the younger generation of film-makers and writers? Who are your favorite authors?

Oh, this is a difficult one! What advice can I give to the young generation? I feel I am still struggling as a writer myself. There is so much to read and learn out there.

One advice which I can give is, don't waste your precious time on the screens of your laptop or mobile. Kitaabien padhne ka maza hi kuch aur hai.

There is so much available today which can help you grow. Find something which can help you unwind as well as nurture your intellect. Let knowledge become your entertainment. Read, watch some good documentaries and gain knowledge. There is so much to learn all around you.

I love to read. The authors whose work I admire and enjoy reading are Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy and Murakami.

LESSER KNOWN FACTS ABOUT DEEPTI NAVAL

- Deepti had joined Hunter College at 68th & Lex - working during the day and attending school at night. She was fond of New York winter.
- She currently owns three homes - a house in Mumbai, a houseboat in Kashmir and a boathouse in Srinagar.





ABOUT DEEPTI

Born in northern India, Deepti Naval is an acclaimed actor. After her schooling, she migrated to the United States, where she was educated at the City University of New York and received her Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts at Hunter College in Manhattan.

She made her debut with the movie Ek Baar Phir in the year 1979 and has acted in more than 60 films since then. Among these are Chashmebaddoor, Kamla, Mirch Masala, Ankahi, Main Zinda Hoon, Panchvati, and more recently, Leela and Freaky Chakra. She also wrote and directed Thodasa Aasmaan, a TV serial about women, and produced a travel show called The Path Less Traveled.

As a writer, her selection of poems, LAMHA LAMHA was published in the year 1981. Her second book of poems, BLACK WIND And Other Poems was published in 2004. THE MAD TIBETAN: Stories From Then and Now was her first anthology of short stories published in 2011. She wrote and directed Thodasa Aasmaan, a women-centric TV serial and produced a travel show The Path Less Travelled.

Deepti was awarded Best Actor in several international film festivals for her roles in Leela, Firaq, Memories in March and Listen Amaya etc. She also won Best Screenplay at the NY Indian film festival for her directorial film, Do Paise Ki Dhoop Chaar Aane Ki Baarish. Deepti Naval was recognized as the 2007 Tribute Honoree of the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles.

As a painter, her knife work with oil on canvas is distinctly expressionistic - especially her landscapes, figures, self-portraits and sketches. She first showed her paintings at the Jehangir Art Gallery in a solo exhibition, called REFLECTIONS followed by several exhibits in India and abroad. The still camera is another excuse for soul-searching time with her Self. Deepti displayed her photography in the series called IN SEARCH OF ANOTHER SKY, ROAD BUILDERS and SHADES OF RED.

Apart from all her interests, Deepti is actively working to create awareness towards the Mentally ill. For the education of the girl child she runs a charitable trust. A gypsy at heart, Deepti enjoys trekking in the remote mountains of Himachal and Ladakh.

FINDING SOLUTIONS

SS
Sharing Stories

Parul Agrawal

Parul Agrawal is one of the Leading Business Growth Strategist, an Engineer by education and an Entrepreneur by passion. She is an International Bestselling Author, TEDx Speaker, contributor for publications like Forbes & Entrepreneur. She is the founder and CEO of ParulAgrawal.com, a cutting-edge business consulting and international publishing platform, a company built to empower authentic leadership on the planet. Follow her at www.parulagrawal.com.

What do you think are the best features of self-publishing and how is it different from traditional publishing in terms of marketing a book?

Self-Publishing has gained a lot of popularity in the last few years. I would say the biggest advantage of self-publishing is author's ability to publish the book as and when needed. I work with authors who are entrepreneurs, coaches, consultants, speakers, etc. and have a very timely message to share with the world. If they wait for the traditional publishing route then by the time their book releases, the message becomes obsolete. On the other hand, a self-published book might miss on the distribution network that a traditional publishing house offers. Also, authors published by a traditional publishing house are perceived as more serious authors. At the end of the day, both routes are great and the direction an author must go is based on their goals and what they wish to achieve with the book.

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

The biggest change is “no limits and no boundaries.” Today an author might be residing in a small village in Africa but has the same capability of reaching a reader base all across the globe that an established author has. Gone are the days when an author had to travel from store to store and knock every door to promote his/her book. With the right marketing strategy and correct use of social media sky is the limit for today's authors.

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

My biggest advice to all new authors is - change your mindset - write the book for the love of writing, write the book because you want to share your message with the world, write your book because it's healing and therapeutic to you. Don't get into the rat race of overnight success. Work on writing a good book that you are proud of, hire a good editor, have an attractive cover and build your author platform. Always strive to strike a chord with your ideal readers and offer them value be it in terms of advice or entertainment. Once your reader knows that you really care for them, there will be no stopping you from gaining success as an author.

What do you think Indian writers and publishers need to change in order to compete with the international publishing houses at a global level? Does having a professional literary agent help in increasing the visibility of a book?

Team work makes dream works. The more people we have to support us in our author journey, the better it is for us, be it literary agent, editors, social media managers or beta readers. Every piece of the puzzle is important when we are trying to serve our readers. I firmly believe publishers whether from India or any other part of the world should truly work in the best interest of the author and serve them to the best of their abilities.

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

Be authentically YOU! Trends come and go, but your originality will stay with you forever. There is no harm in experimenting. If you want to go out of your genre for a book then go for it. Believe in MAGIC and do what brings you JOY!

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

Every child is different and we as parents/caregivers should help them inculcate the love for reading rather than forcing them to read something that we think is good for them. My ten year old loves reading about geography and ancient history while my 3-year old loves to read Peppa Pig and princess books. If I had to pick my all-time favorite then I would go with Dr. Seuss and Ruskin Bond always.

Every child is different and we as parents/caregivers should help them inculcate the love for reading rather than forcing them to read something that we think is good for them. My ten year old loves reading about geography and ancient history while my 3-year old loves to read Peppa Pig and princess books. If I had to pick my all-time favorite then I would go with Dr. Seuss and Ruskin Bond always.



A few lines -

no one has been able to escape pain
some conquer it
it rules some
some get burnt by it
it fuels some
- let pain fuel you

to reach heights, you need
to understand depths, first.
and to understand depths,
you have to fall deep.
real deep.
where hell and bottom meet.

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

Right now, I just want to lie back and see what my readers have to say about the book and if they can relate to the language of my heart. There are a few themes in my mind. But I'd like them to ripen a bit before I can start to pen them down. I'd like to write my heart out but also address challenges that today's youth grapples with and share my perspectives in their rawest form.

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

I am a single and happy mom, with a young son who means the world to me. I hail from Mumbai but have spent most of my youth years in Gurgaon, NCR. My family, my support system and my best friends are in Mumbai but there's something about the vibe of the millennial city now that I can't resist.

Personally, I am an empath and introvert. My world comprises of few friends, with each of whom I share a deep connect, my Friday evenings and my darkest secrets. I don't judge people because I believe our journeys are such personal experiences and wish people stopped judging too.

You are working in one of the top brands and shoulder a lot of responsibility. Has this ever affected the creative side of your personality? How do you manage to keep a balance in both the roles?

In my professional role as well, my forte has been 'people connect'. My strength revolves around understanding personas and personalizing experiences for them, which is in a way linked to my purpose. And as such, my personal and professional journeys converge and help me grow emotionally, spiritually and creatively.

Balancing is not difficult if you get paid for doing what you love doing. It's just about managing priorities and setting pragmatic and realistic goals for oneself. Growth for me does not necessarily mean vertical movement, it means width, it means depth, and it means creating an impact through profound experiences. It is about the journey, never about the destination. The destination will unravel, but the journey has been beautiful so far.

What has been your most cherished experience as a poet?

I have delivered writing workshops and motivational lectures to students and aspiring writers and to witness their reactions and see how it impacts and inspires them is very fulfilling for me as a poet. When people relate to you, are able to see through your authentic self, respect you for your struggles and draw inspiration from your strength, that is success, that is happiness. I have always dared to be vulnerable, and I think that is fashionable. People opening up about their lives, sharing their stories when I dare to be vulnerable is truly beautiful and overwhelming.



ARE YOU A WRITER?

**PUBLISH
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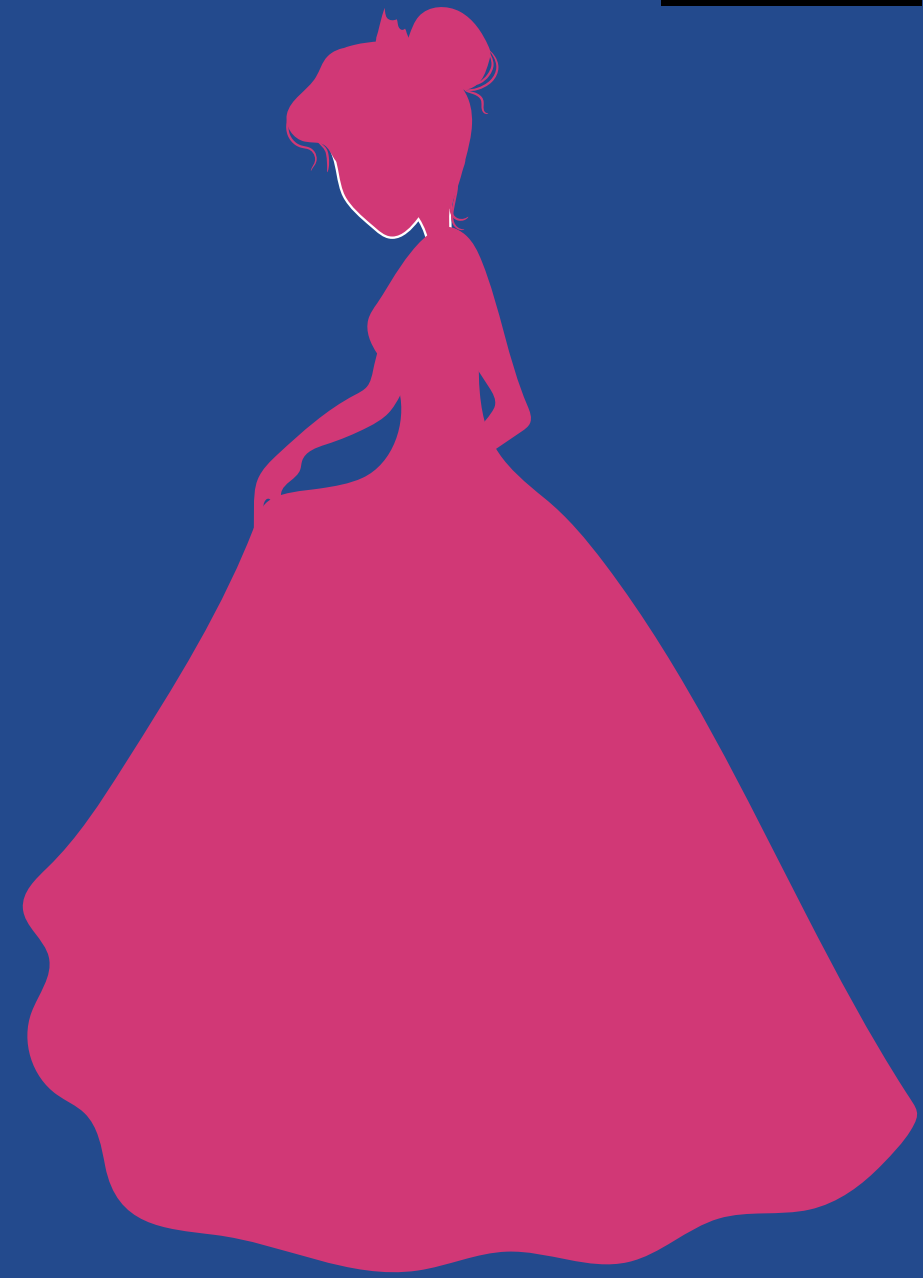
**WITH INDIA'S LARGEST
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&

**SELL YOUR
BOOK**

IN 120+ COUNTRIES





Ms. Raina Khatri Tandon is the Founder of Right2Rise® Top20 Posh Specialist in the country promoting inclusiveness, maintaining ethical workplaces by creating strategies with a heart. Right2rise® is India's First and only ISO 27001, 17024, 9001 Certified organization taking pride in spanning over many global clients worldwide few of them naming Natwest, Tata, Sun pharma, Barclays, CAMS INDIA and Seaspan Canada. Raina is a breakthrough coach and has been felicitated as Global 100 Mentors, United Nations Rex Karmveer award 2019 and felicitated by World HRD Congress and UBS transformance as Woman Excellence award 2019-2020 and is also Leading Maharashtra Chapter head for WEF (Global Women Economic Forum) in Training & Entrepreneurship. She speaks 12 languages.

Raina Khatri Tandon

Donning so many hats since a young age, when did you decide for the first time in your life to be an entrepreneur?

In my 23 years of vast experience, About 5-6 years ago I realized through a personal incident of my family's demise, that creating a LEGACY to leave behind and an impact in some lives when I was no more is very essential. Values, Integrity, Respect are mere words in the 22nd century that generation need to live by in their actions and I want to be that warrior of change to do so to awaken minds and nurture vision, and make dreams come true for all future generation & a sunny tomorrow.

You are an acclaimed speaker and have received many prestigious awards. What is that one thing which a speaker should always keep in mind while connecting with his/her audience?

An acclaimed speaker is one who will speak only and only what his audience wants to hear, i.e. Be a revolutionary and talk with your own life experiences narrating stories that have impacted you to visionary mindset – Its always about the audience, little things genuinely that’s implementable, crisp, interactive & amusing, Yet stays with them on their mind forever -FOLLOW RAINA'S PRINCIPLE FOR ACCLAIMED SPEAKER - Story Communicate Audience Interactive -SCAI (SAY LIKE SKY)
It’s always about the audience- Add value, ‘Kiss – keep it short crisp simple and implementable’, Impact Interactive and Relate to them personally through the story, Take their names and add personalization (people love their names) All the best, The stage is yours, my friend!

What has been your most cherished experience as a corporate trainer? How have things changed in current times when it comes to accept women as decision-makers in the corporate sector?

The beautiful experience in corporate training is understanding the journey of not knowing anything to knowing everything today, from terms, clients, customers need to today's knowing of how to upskill the KRA KPI PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH COMPLIANCE AUDIT and also helping them through the process of having a healthy safe and conducive workspaces.

The journey was so beautiful from learning. Small learnings at training session outcomes to massive experiences addressing auditorium ground of 5,000 people as audience. That’s the biggest audience I have had in a corporate event on the yearly closing event. Though we see women breaking the glass ceiling and many becoming organization board members or founding CEOs of their own company start-ups, yet bias myths and judgments still curl in society at large on women being sensitive, indecisive, and not those who can make strong sustainable decisions.

We in India are still far away from the acceptance of women standing as leaders with men supporting them on the lower pedestal and to understand that they are creative, courageous and great multi-taskers and powerful leaders.

Tell us more about Right2Rise. What kind of work culture exists in your organization and how did you establish it?

Right2rise India s 1st and only ISO 21001, 17024 comprehensive POSH- POSCO & STRESS specialist promoting gender-neutral and ethical workplaces creating strategic solutions with a heart.

At **Right2Rise**, we believe that for the growth and productivity of any organization to happen the workplace should be gender-sensitive and one of equality and respect of all genres. Many have fallen victim to sexual and verbal assault, anxiety and post-traumatic disorders, depression, and tags of social media where our flagship product “Reachout” is designed creatively and with real-life examples to engage and provide solutions to comply with POSH law.

Right2rise®, a part OF ITF Global Pvt. Ltd. is India's only ISO 21001, ISO 7024 CERTIFIED GLOBALLY TUC accredited organisation to certify individuals to create and provide end to end solutions for POSH POCSO AND STRESS SOLUTIONS in training compliance and auditing.

Our Core belief: Every individual has the right to rise and reach to maximise his/her potentials so that collectively we grow in a safe and healthy environment and effectively produce MAXIMISED RESULTED outcomes .

Our Vision

To create a safe ecosystem, aiding individuals and organizations to reach their greatest potential, maintaining safety, respect, trust, and values in their lives.

Our Mission

·Design Develop and Deliver to Educate the society on various awareness programs on Women, child and human rights, mental - resilience, and gender bias-free attitudes

·We aim to establish and institutionalize core values, work ethics, and business /relationships processes & practices.

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

Develop the leaders around u- John C Maxwell
Intelligence – The creative response to Now - Osho
The infinite game -Simon Sinek
The 5 am club -Robin Sharma
Change Your Thinking Change Your Life -Brian Tracy

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



WHAT IF ROUND

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

My laptop, lime mint cooler, and silent corner ..(Mein Aur Meri Tanhayee)

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

How people Judge people or perceive people.

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

Buy an island and Raise the Global standard of living in the City 1st then the country and the world ensuring respect in humanity

It's always a combination of many things like an iceberg below the sea u see ...Wow it's like a poem. But no. one is consistency, and second is knowledge, skill and strategy

What are the challenges that you often face being a young and successful woman entrepreneur?

Finding your niche, The target audience, MARKETING TO THE RIGHT people, financial growth and stability, market changes, technology upheavals, and the Right mindset of people you choose to be with.

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

Super woman ,A perception to perfection -Life is A RIPPLE -Live in the moment

Can you describe/outline your typical day?

What entrepreneurial tricks have you discovered to keep you focused and productive in your day-to-day busy schedule?

RAPID FIRE

Favorite...

Place: On the seashore, Mountain peak, Switzerland & Kashmir

Person: My conscious

Food: Butter Chicken

Beverage: Cold Milkshakes

Book: Life Without Limits by Nick Vujicic

First Love: London City & Shhhh... That's Undercover!

Your Other Talents: Painting and Dancing, Cooking & Baking, Cycling, Swimming, Ikebana, Calligraphy

Favorite Quote: You are Definitely the Brightest Witch of your age, You have matured as the smartest and will emerge as a great warrior of change in time! Believe me "IF YOU CAN'T, Then WHO CAN! Believe in yourself, Stand up for what's Right!

Favorite character from a book-Hellen Keller from The Story of My Life



My day starts at 5.30am – 30min me time to set in, Yoga 6am -7 am welcome the sunshine energies in my life , A normal family routine from being a mother& wife house chores and stepping into workspace from 9.30am -9.30 pm with breaks of food and Pomodoro breaks scheduling , prioritizing and delegating work at personal , company and clients with each day a new beginning and a new ending , no one fit for all , always going with the to-do list to up-skilling my knowledge and skills with new learning , reading books and hearing new stories my way ,missed with spice of love care and lot of fun with family and walks over evening . Certain days can be taxing like heavily loaded with certifications and CHILD OR WOMEN abuse cases of harassment and cyber bullying, but with a good meal , family time and smile and laughter of my family and a Netflix series and popcorn it all ends well .One thing that ,makes me productive is my workspace of calm and the resilience ,plan focus on my work and growth and keeping gadgets planned on certain timings ,read and exercise body mind and soul- and always be an ardent learner.

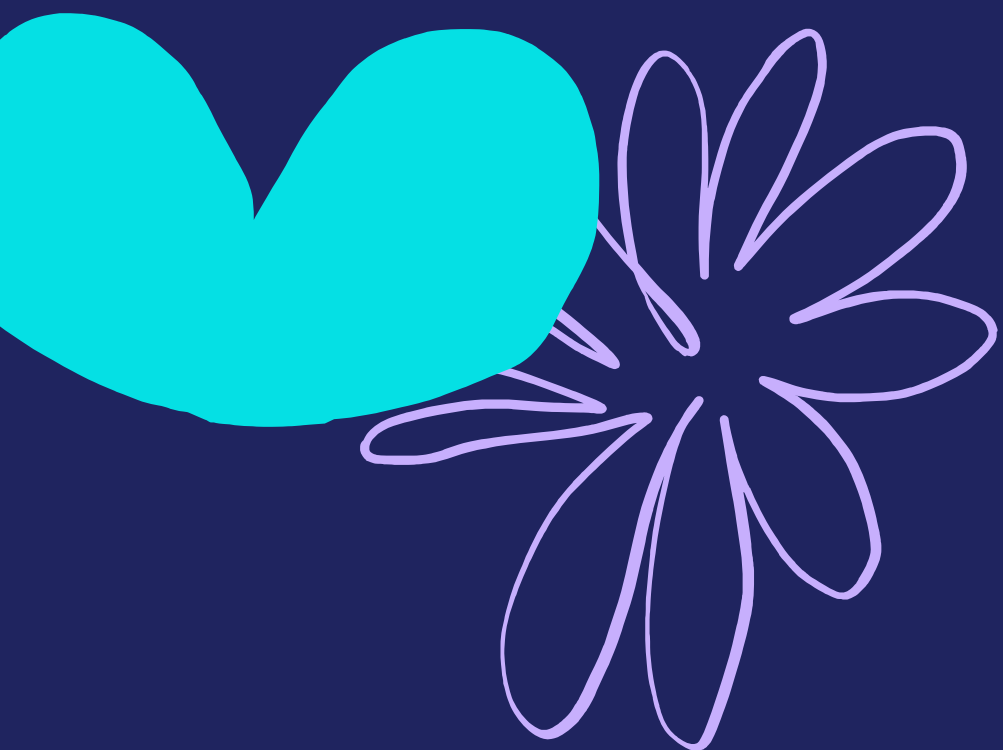
What is that one message you would like to give to all the aspiring women entrepreneurs or path-breakers on the occasion of International Women’s Day?

Challenges are always going to remain, what shows the inner power when you jump up every morning when no one tells you no one sees you and yet INSPIRES you to touch and create miracles in every life, leave a smile on many faces and live a life of an adventurous curious soul always wishing to learn new things welcoming every moment with tag “ BIO – BRING IT ON!- LET'S LIVE LIFE, THE LIFE AS A STAGE AS IF THIS IS THE LAST MOMENT I CAN DO SOMETHING MAGICAL – SPREAD UR SPARK”.. ARE YOU THE ONE? YES, STEP UP TODAY....





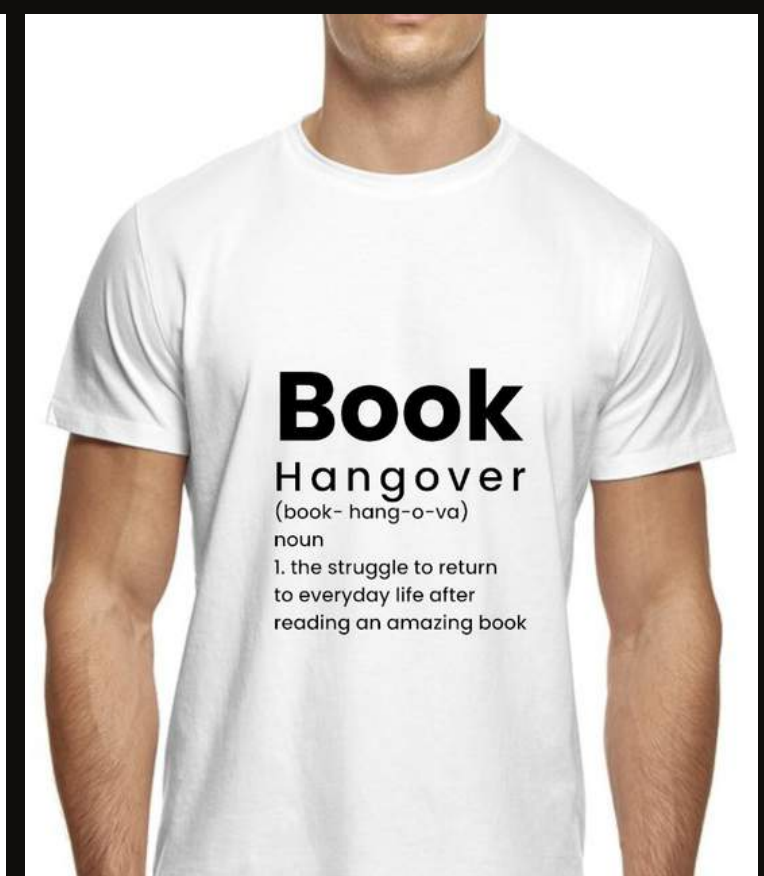
Empowered
Women
Empower
Women

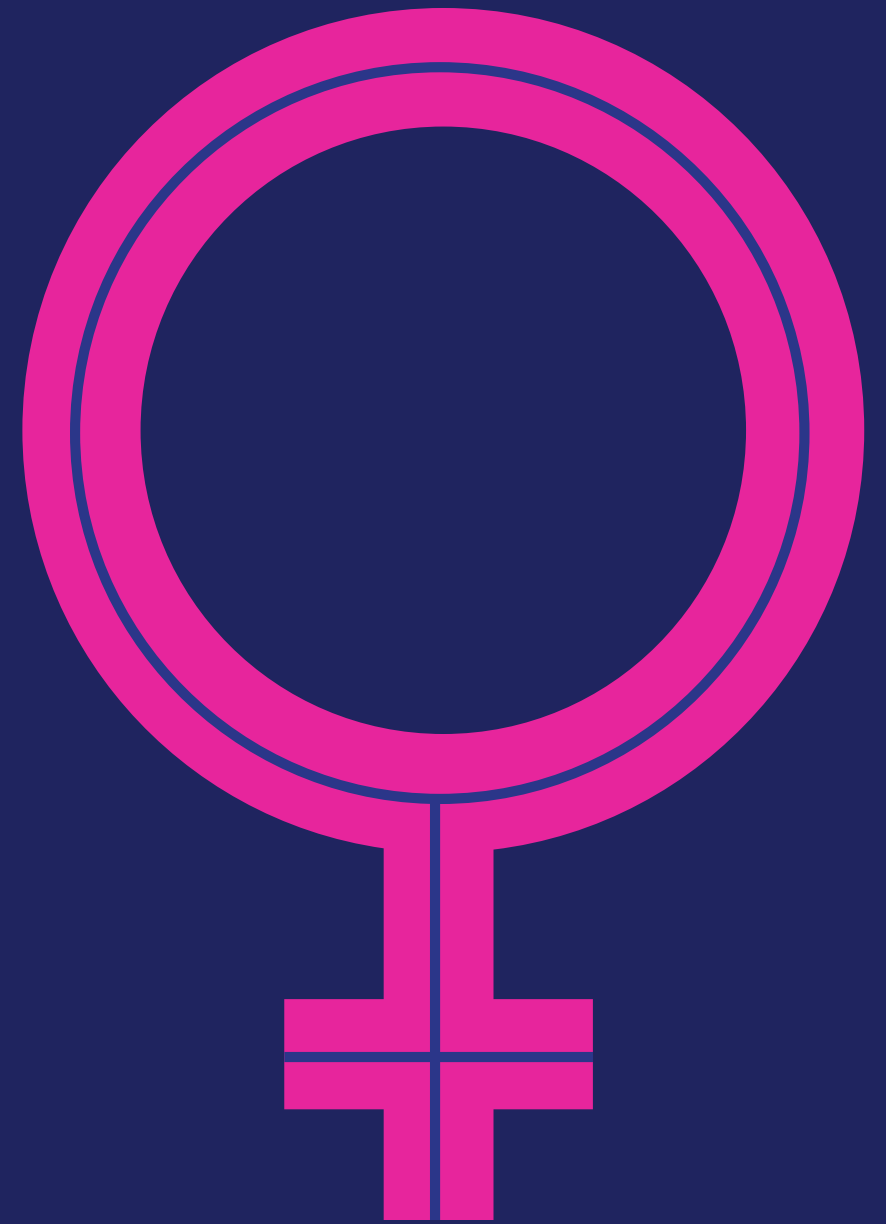


SHARING STORIES ONLINE STORE

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Dr. Saumya Goyal is a mental health advocate, organizational and counseling psychologist, emotional wellness speaker, award-winning author of two poetry books – Unhustle, Moon Letters and co-author with over 10 anthologies. She is the founder of WEQIP – a digital platform on emotional wellness and publisher of WEMAG – a digital magazine on emotional wellness. She is the President of WICCI's National Mental Health Council, and winner of the IAF Women of Excellence and Literoma Golden Star awards. She is an engineer and MBA by education, a three-time gold-medalist in psychology and holds a PhD in psychology. She has previously worked with corporates like Satyam, Deloitte and UBS and eventually found her calling in mental health advocacy. She counsels, guides and supports individuals from all walks of life. She regularly blogs and writes articles on parenting, women issues and emotional wellness. She lives in Hyderabad with her husband and two children.

Dr. Saumya Goyal

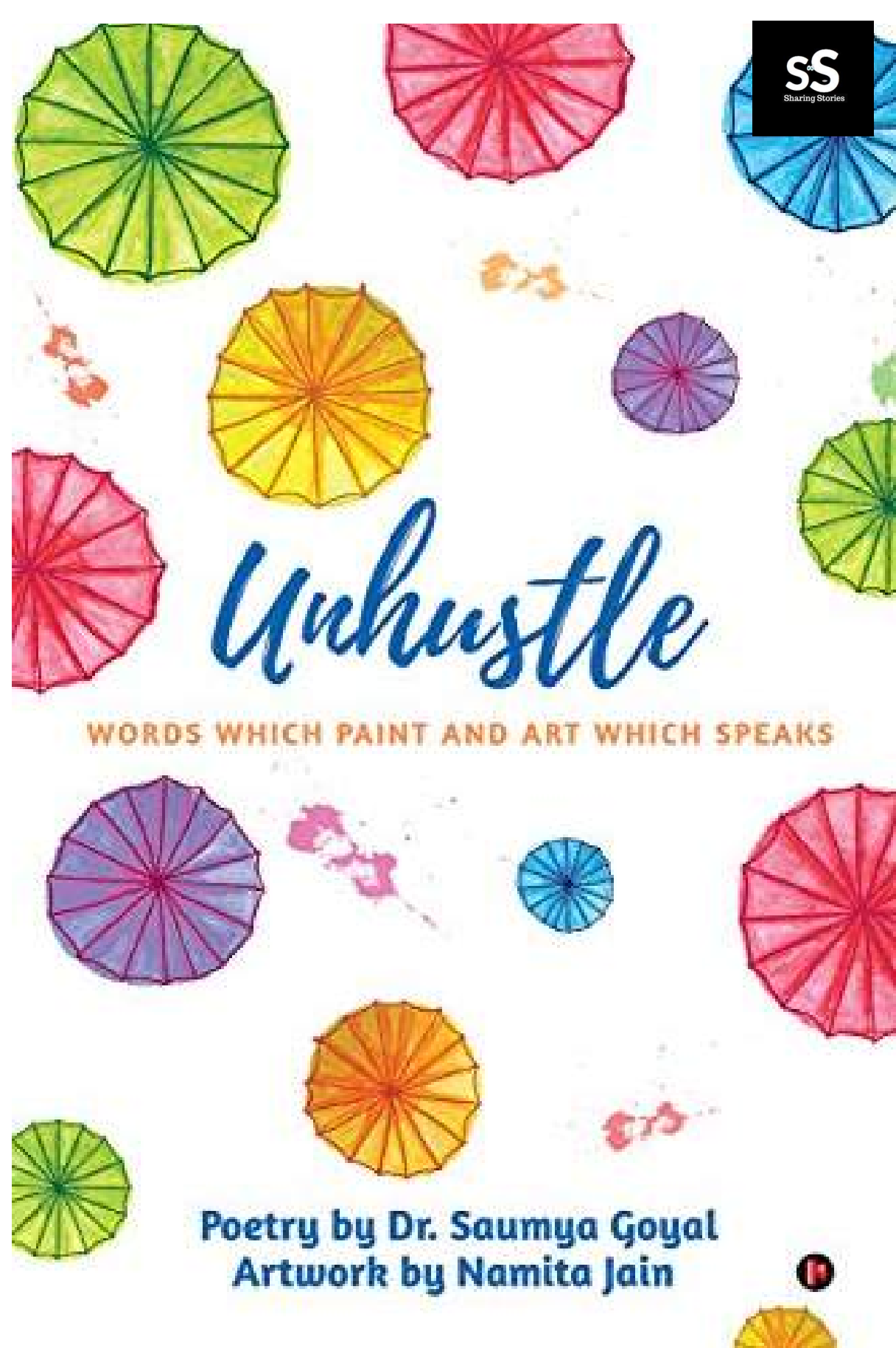
“Sometimes, we do not get a chance to thank each one who has helped us in our Journey.”

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'll start with my parents for the love they inculcated in me for books and reading. Dad's trips out-of-town always ended in him bringing books for me and my elder brother. The fairy tales and the folktales we read as children took us into a world filled with possibilities. Then, my husband who shares my love for books - who introduced the world of Ayn Rand and non-fiction to me. His love for Richard Feynman, Nassim Taleb, Matt Ridley, Will Durant, Yuval Harari and so many others reminds me that I have just scratched the surface of the iceberg's tip. Then my two children, who pull me into their own world of Harry Potter and Roald Dahl. Over the years all these people have taught me the power of the written word, the surreal world of books in which one can get lost. Had this ecosystem not existed, I would not have thought of writing. And most importantly, I am ever grateful to all those who write and all those who read - without one the other would not exist.

When and how did the idea of authoring a book come to you? Can you tell us a bit about 'Unhustle' and share a few lines from any of the poem?

Writing a book had been a dream since I was a young girl. My mother is a doctor by day and a Hindi poet by night with seven books to her credit. Our house was filled with hand-written poems and it felt only natural that I should write too. I remember writing poems for my school magazine but somehow that had become infrequent over the years. While I have been writing blogs and academic and non-academic articles for a while now, poetry has remained my first love. I started composing poetry again about three years back when I was building a digital platform for emotional wellness. Last year during the pandemic, a realization came that humanity has hustled for a long time now, compromising our emotional health and taking little joys around us for granted; leading nature to forcibly put us in pause mode during the lockdown.



These observations and self-reflections became the theme of the poetry book I decided to write. I named it Unhustle; - for the world needed to go through just that!

From 'Sail On'...

Shattering is not an option, you're not made of glass
You have to have faith, cause this too shall pass
So, don't pause; sail on, sail on, sail on...

From 'Let's Cling On'...

That which appears after a storm
That which arises when all things go wrong
That which is faint, which is feeble, which is subdued
That which helps us cope
Let's cling on to that hope

From 'Sail On'...

Shattering is not an option, you're not made of glass
You have to have faith, cause this too shall pass
So, don't pause; sail on, sail on, sail on...

From 'Fuchsia'...

A million emotions,
these tears hum
Shaped like Fuchsia,
dancing they come

From 'This is Me'...

Lift the world if I can
I am proud of who I am
Embrace me with my flaws
No conditions no clause
This is me...overwhelmingly
Unabashed unapologetically

Your book has beautiful illustrations and also you have used the phrase, 'words that paint and art which speaks' as the tagline for 'Unhustle'. Please elaborate the idea behind it.

My dear friend Namita Jain graciously agreed to join this journey and came onboard as the book's illustrator. That was when this challenging yet exceptionally fulfilling voyage began. Our book is a book of words and art in equal measure for both the mediums complement each other beautifully. Creating this book was a very organic process. There were times when she created illustrations for the words I wrote while at times she made an illustration first and the poetry followed. We worked on the book mostly at night after finishing up the day chores. The process was thoroughly rewarding and enriching, and we were able to put 'Unhustle' together in less than two months.

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

Both of us have recently collaborated for our second book 'Moon Letters' which is a combination of micro-poetry and line art. Parallely, I have also collaborated with budding writers and have contributed to ten poetry anthologies as a co-author. While working with young authors, I have realized that not just the virus, the exuberance of youth is equally contagious, and I look forward to keep doing this regularly. As for a solo book, I do have a few ideas for books in mind and am waiting to discover which one supersedes others and takes precedence.



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

While there are different genres to choose from, I will share a mix from a few.

- Man' Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl
- The Prophet by Kahil Gibran
- Harry Potter Series by J.K. Rowling
- Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything by Steven D. Levitt
- Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari

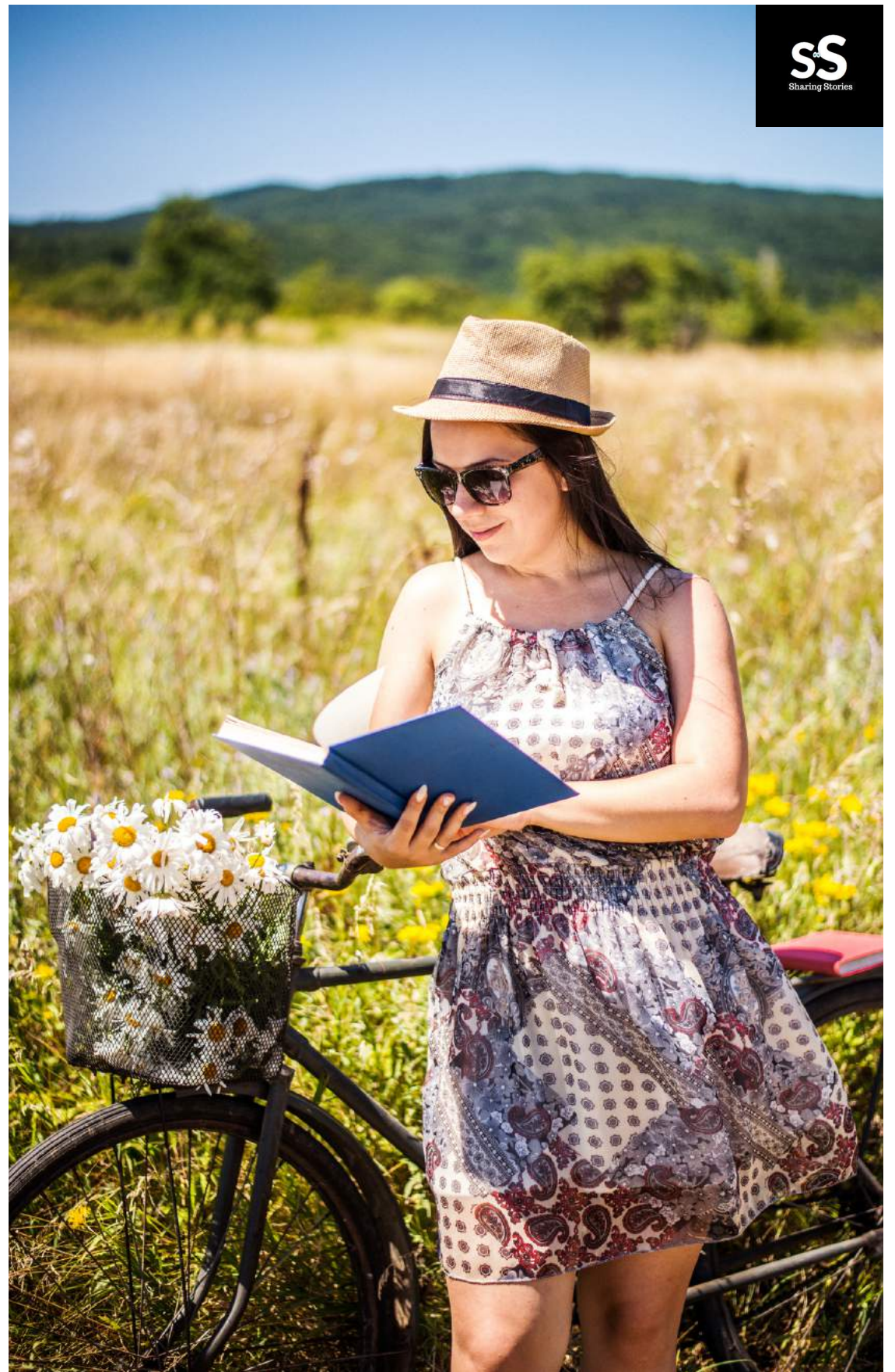
I have been a fan of Dan Brown's research, J.K. Rowling's imagination, and Georges Remi's (Hergé) creation of Tintin. They will always rank among my favorite creators.

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

We are a family comprising of my husband Amol Gupta, our two children – Prisha, 12 and Shaurya, 8 - and me. All four of us have such unique personalities, yet we feel that we fit in with each other like a jigsaw puzzle. What really bowls me over are a person's humility, kindness, and knowledge whereas I am not a big fan of sarcasm and people plagiarizing ideas end-to-end.

Could you share few tips for Young Authors?

Write. Write. And Write! For there is no other way to become an author. It is also important to read as much as possible – especially the genres that resonate with you. That also helps one to stay up to date with what others are doing and what kind of work is attracting readers. We all, including young authors, should also be ready to embrace any feedback – both positive and negative. Nowadays, there are several digital platforms that connect authors from all over the world. They constantly read and provide feedback for each other's works.



SS
Sharing Stories

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

Someone wise told me once, writing is an easier process while making sure your book is read is a completely different ballgame altogether. And she was right! Of course, the immediate circle of family and friends become our first readers, so do not shy away from asking them to review the book on e-commerce sites where the book is available. While many will not do it, quite a few certainly will. Social media plays a vital role to reach the audience. Participate in author sessions whenever you get an opportunity and interact with those who engage with you regularly. These will turn out to be your loyal readers. Posting pictures or quotes or excerpts from the book time and again also helps. Also, read, encourage, and promote other authors –genuinely without expecting anything in return.



WHAT IF ROUND

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

Hope, Love and Common Sense

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

I would wish people were kinder to one another.

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

Buy as many books as I could and open libraries all around.

RAPID FIRE

Favourite....

Place: My home

Person: My husband

Food: Dosa

Beverage: Ginger chai

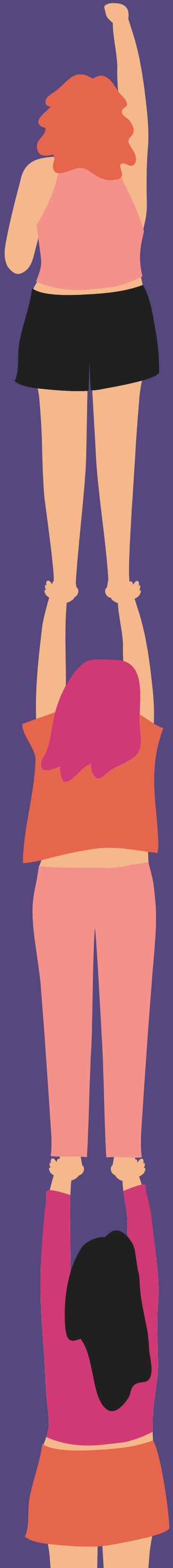
Your other Talents: Closet singer, leisure artist

First Love: Books

Favourite Quote: 'It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities. - Albus Dumbledore in Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

Favorite character from a book- Severus Snape from Harry Potter





YOU GO GIRL!

Girls can transform lives and communities when given access to education. But today, over 130 million girls remain out of school.

FIGHT FOR EQUAL EDUCATION



What Stories mean?

Do they really mean what they mean?

Why share a Story and what's the distance it can reach the maximum?

Should it really end with a moral value or leave an experience to explore?

These were the questions I was bombarded with, maybe you are hit by them too. There's always a fight within, and when allowed to cocoon, one story was formed and at the same time when I let it fly by attaching a pair of wings, it came back dancing yet another story in front of my eyes. That's when the neurons within my mind started playing the Chinese whisper game by sharing the message to another neuron, it started traveling not only the length and the breadth of my body but these messages started traveling outside of me to many people around me, to form a chain called Stories and we are connected with one another through the stories we shared and will continue sharing.

Always wondered what a story really means? When I actually went looking for one, I came back with a dozen of puzzles to solve. As I solved the puzzle, there was Maze standing tall in front of me, like a mountain, well, I managed to find a way out and that's when I realised that it's not only in reaching the end point but it's in garlanding the experience gained.

What's the maximum distance it can reach? I thought if a calculator can help me in finding the distance, speed and time. Slapped I was to find that it travels within first and then to the walls of the body to reflect.

Looking for meaning in a story has put me in a meaningless situation, at times. The learning is in the experience and to explore the untapped destinations, which can also be in a 'Silence!'

Are you looking for Stories? Come along. We as a team will walk you through stories on Mayaakatha, Where Stories Dance, a community connecting Storytellers and Stories on Facebook

And, as we reach this point in time, we would like to dance and share that it's the first year Anniversary and we have organized for a Virtual fest between 01st April - 05th April 2021 called, **MAYOTHSAVA**. We have Stories, Stories and Stories. You Have a Story? How lovely to know that you do! Please reach us on storieswithmayaakatha@gmail.com





REPAIRING, SHATTERED DREAMS

With flapping, fluttering wings
she started the journey to conquer her
dreams.

Grey clouds hovering over the sky,
frightening, blocking her flight.
But with utter determination, fighting all
the odds
she dauntlessly clambered the cliff.
She was enjoying the sight of her
victorious being,
when a sudden thunder, shoved her
from her fantasies.

Disgruntled she was, but brave heartedly
she reckoned to combat.

She got up, tightened her fist,
Ready to face all the adversaries
Armouring and adorning herself with
self-love, self-belief, holding the fort
she stepped forward to repair her
shattered dreams.

BHAWNA HIMAT SINGHANI

AMBROSIAL FANTASIES OF TWILIGHT

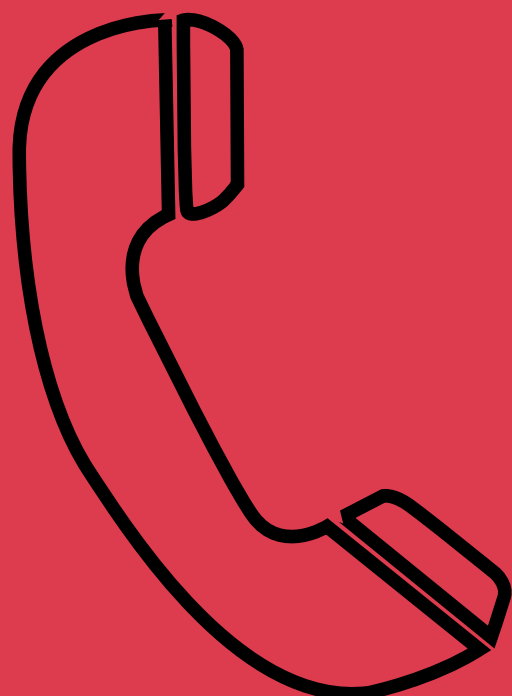
I yearn to unwind my resilient self and
expand
To deactivate and zip up from tasks at
hand
Not to focus at pretentious and myriad
life's outlook
But to be lost in world of best loved awe
inspiring books
Like a sparkling dew drop unscathed and
rampart
To buoyant dreams and listen to
melodies of heart
Awaken gleeful with crystalline
perspective versatile
To experience subliminal self and
flashing august smiles
Breathe without perverse or criticism
and unroll
Just to put my feet up and enliven the
ecstasy.

KETKI JALAN



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SAY IT WITH AN IDIOM

“TO ANTE UP”

Meaning: To pay someone (similar to “pony up”).

Source: www.fluentu.com

Example of use: 1. Joe: “I’m tired of doing the housework by myself. You need to ante up or find a new roommate.”

2. “You’d better ante up and give me that \$10 I loaned you last week.”

Origin -The expression ante up comes from the game of poker, where players bet their money before the cards are dealt. If this expression looks familiar, it’s because ante is also Latin for “before.”

Over time, the idiom has come to refer to any type of payment someone owes—not just in poker.

WORDSMITH'S CORNER

‘MANSREADING’

(NOUN)

Meaning

Occupying more than required space.

Word Origin

If you use public transportation, you’ve probably been exposed to or even engaged in mansreading: Male commuters whose legs commit the relatively annoying crime of seat-trespassing – when the offenders sit with their legs wide apart so they take up more than one seat.

Example Of usage:

“There’s so much mansreading going on on my train; I think I’m going to start biking to work.”

Source: www.ef.com

Source: www.lexico.com

Sharing Stories | Humanity



SS
Sharing Stories

Every woman should be able to draw her boundaries and not fear any space. A woman isn't helpless. She's just helped less. Durga is here to change that. Durga is an acronym for Dare to Understand behavior, Respond appropriately, and Guard ourselves Ably. Durga is every woman who is equipped to take control over her safety. Durga is a citizen-sector organization based out of Bangalore, working since 2013 with the ultimate vision of equipping women to deter sexual harassment and creating gender-equitable spaces in India. At Durga, we work with women, men, youth, adolescents, communities, street vendors, and corporates because women's safety is everybody's problem and the onus of making spaces safe is on each one of us in the society.

What we do to enable safety and create safe spaces

Through our flagship Durga Safety Workshops, our team of facilitators equip women and girls across all segments of society to be aware, and prepared to tackle harassment. The workshop integrates theatre-based techniques that allow them to transform from survivors of harassment to solution providers.

At campuses, we set up VOICE Labs (democratic student community) to equip students as socially-responsible, gender-sensitive individuals. At schools, we interact with adolescent boys and girls, initiate conversations around gender, help them identify and bust gender stereotypes. Our program, Building Blocks, helps children from vulnerable backgrounds residing at shelter homes and observation homes identify different forms of harassment, gender roles and stereotypes.

Durga

A woman isn't helpless. She's just helped less. Durga is here to change that.

**NGO
Profiling**

Active Bystander Intervention is the most effective way of reducing harassment in public spaces. We engage with street vendors who occupy a certain space in public for 8-10 hours a day. We convert them into DAREs - Durgas Are Real heroes Everywhere - who would intervene in cases of harassment against any woman. Likewise, on the online space, Durga's Cyber Warriors (from the Voice Out program) constantly audit cyber space for inappropriate posts, trolls. Our 21-day engagement with different communities such as Bruhat Bengaluru MahanagaraPalike (BBMP) Pourakarmikas & Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTc) staff in Bangalore, is thorough and addresses issues related to gender and women's safety.

Durga's footprint

Since our inception in 2013, we've created over 9,500 Durgas through safety workshops, and over 50,000 indirect beneficiaries. Our Durga Champions are spread across 10 VOICE Labs in schools and colleges, and 300+ DAREs are responsible for making the streets they occupy safer. Durga in partnership with BMTc set up the Durga Panic Alarms in over 150 buses. Durga has engaged with 60+ speakers & 650+ participants through the platform 'Durga Listens' - a fortnightly engagement to share personal experiences related to gender and women's safety. Our Voice Out warriors had reported nearly 1000 inappropriate online posts in 2019.

Durga is an external member in the POSH committees of various organisations. Durga was awarded the Regional Winner in the Spirit of Humanity Annual Awards 2019 for contribution in the field of women empowerment.

In December 2020, Durga hosted the first of its kind online youth centric forum on gender equity - NGAGE (Next Gen Advocates for Gender Equity) - where we had young and seasoned gender justice activists from across the country addressing various issues on gender, safety and laws to over 2000 youth participants from colleges and universities across the country.

In March 2021, as part of International Women's Day, Durga launched the Box IT initiative in association with BMTc to increase reporting of complaints on safety. This is a simple box that will be placed in prominent places in important bus terminals. The idea was to provide women safe access to be able to raise complaints as and when they encounter any instance of harassment in a public space.



About the Founder:

Priya Varadarajan is the Lead for Gender Justice and Persons with Disabilities Clusters within The AzimPremji Philanthropy.

Priya has worked with The Philanthropy for over four years now in various capacities – Finance, Programmes, Portfolio Lead and now Cluster Lead for two of the largest clusters.

A Chartered Accountant by Profession, Priya has spent the first few years of her career at Deloitte, EY and Infosys. She has also worked as a Financial Analyst in one of the start-ups of Nadathur Holdings. She soon realised that she has more interest in development issues and spent about 10 years with the British Government in India, working on Healthcare and Life Sciences as a National Lead.

Priya holds deep empathy and connects with the vulnerable particularly with women and girls who are survivors of gender-based violence and abuse.

An avid reader of the different waves of Feminism the world has seen, student of a Masters in Gender and Women's Studies, TEDx Speaker and traveller, Priya tries to learn Carnatic music (intermittently) in her spare time. She feels she is able to follow every dream purely because of her dedicated fitness walks, exercise and the Universal Energy – Reiki!



Shilpa is a corporate strategist. But that does not define her existence. Her corporate career is a part of life for her and poetry is the heart of it.

She was never cut to live a white picket fence life. Being a rebel at heart in a very conformist society, she has experienced all the joys that come with it - agony, social scorn, oppression and ostracism. But the silver lining for her has been the rise of her consciousness, the awakening of her spirit, the beckoning of her calling: writing. It feeds her soul.

Shilpa also enjoys coaching and mentoring students pursuing their writing dreams. She has delivered several sessions to budding writers and students studying in universities and institutions like Symbiosis and other renowned brands.

She hopes the launch of her debut book 'love.feel.pain.heal.repeat' is the beginning of a trajectory that the Cosmos wants her to tread on to reach where she is meant to be, some day - chasing her dream of becoming a full-time writer and an entrepreneur. Because she believes that the best feeling in the world is getting paid to do what you love.

Shilpa

In a short span of your journey from Yale University to becoming the Founder CEO of Impact Study Biz, you have garnered a variety of experiences like writing, winning a beauty pageant and a film making course too. What made you pin-point and pick up the profession as a Brand Strategist?

Well, if I may use poetry to answer this question, I'd say -

I would like to thank

every smile
 every tear
 every force
 every fear
 every pleasure
 every pain
 every loss
 every gain
 every blessing
 every curse
 every poem
 every verse

that 'love' bestowed upon me,
 so I could put this book together
 with all my broken pieces.

It was solely love and pain that inspired me to write. All the people in my journey who gave me a chance to experience these emotions are the ones I'd like to thank from the bottom of my heart. I don't think I would have discovered my calling, had it not been for them. I'd also like to thank my mentors who fuelled my passion and encouraged me to share my musings with the world, when I was going through rock bottom in my life. Also, I drew inspiration from the great contemporary poets of today.

When and how did the idea of writing a book come to you? Can you tell a bit about the Title of your poetry book and share a few lines from it?

The title of the book is love.feel.pain.heal.repeat
 The poems in this book reinforce that even though love is an uphill task, it is intrinsic and beautiful, and that every emotion it elicits – pain, anguish, anticipation, joy and passion – is so worth living, at least once in a lifetime.

MARCH 2021



It makes you dive into them, feel them and live them through my voyage. My verses signify that pain is inevitable, but combating it, rising beyond it and upholding faith in love is certainly a choice. Through the sometimes heart-warming and sometimes heart-wrenching verses, I urge you not just to heal yourself, but also to rediscover your soul and its calling. The book conveys that love may or may not stay forever, but it leaves a blessing that stays with you, till eternity.

Embrace it.

This book is catharsis of my emotions. It came to me when I could not contain them within me any longer. I thought I'd explode so I needed to share it with the world. Needed to air my wounds, talk about my vulnerabilities and the strength Universe gave me to combat adversities, loneliness and come out stronger and happier. The beauty of poetry is that it finds the one who needs it most and that is what feeds my soul – if my words help people fight their battles with a little more hope, faith and strength, then I'd feel I found my purpose.

A few lines -

no one has been able to escape pain
some conquer it
it rules some
some get burnt by it
it fuels some
- let pain fuel you

to reach heights, you need
to understand depths, first.
and to understand depths,
you have to fall deep.
real deep.
where hell and bottom meet.

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

Right now, I just want to lie back and see what my readers have to say about the book and if they can relate to the language of my heart. There are a few themes in my mind. But I'd like them to ripen a bit before I can start to pen them down. I'd like to write my heart out but also address challenges that today's youth grapples with and share my perspectives in their rawest form.

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

I am a single and happy mom, with a young son who means the world to me. I hail from Mumbai but have spent most of my youth years in Gurgaon, NCR. My family, my support system and my best friends are in Mumbai but there's something about the vibe of the millennial city now that I can't resist.

Personally, I am an empath and introvert. My world comprises of few friends, with each of whom I share a deep connect, my Friday evenings and my darkest secrets. I don't judge people because I believe our journeys are such personal experiences and wish people stopped judging too.

You are working in one of the top brands and shoulder a lot of responsibility. Has this ever affected the creative side of your personality? How do you manage to keep a balance in both the roles?

In my professional role as well, my forte has been 'people connect'. My strength revolves around understanding personas and personalizing experiences for them, which is in a way linked to my purpose. And as such, my personal and professional journeys converge and help me grow emotionally, spiritually and creatively.

Balancing is not difficult if you get paid for doing what you love doing. It's just about managing priorities and setting pragmatic and realistic goals for oneself. Growth for me does not necessarily mean vertical movement, it means width, it means depth, and it means creating an impact through profound experiences. It is about the journey, never about the destination. The destination will unravel, but the journey has been beautiful so far.

What has been your most cherished experience as a poet?

I have delivered writing workshops and motivational lectures to students and aspiring writers and to witness their reactions and see how it impacts and inspires them is very fulfilling for me as a poet. When people relate to you, are able to see through your authentic self, respect you for your struggles and draw inspiration from your strength, that is success, that is happiness. I have always dared to be vulnerable, and I think that is fashionable. People opening up about their lives, sharing their stories when I dare to be vulnerable is truly beautiful and overwhelming.



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

5 books

forty rules of love
Milk and honey
No one belongs here more than you
woman is no man
All Along You Were Blooming

Authors/poets

Paulo Coelho
RupiKaur
Nicholas Sparks

List goes on...

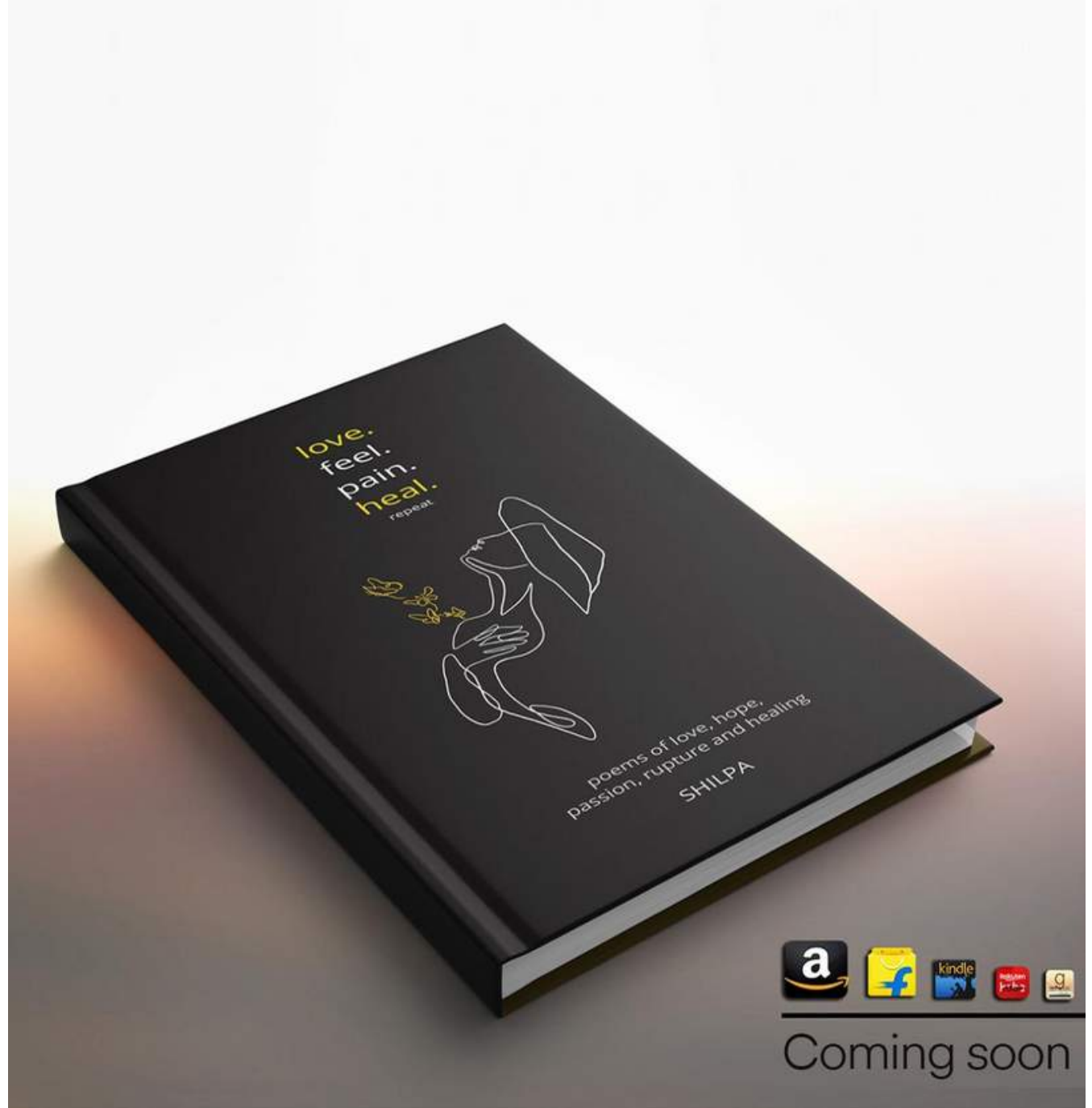
What would say is the most key component of success? Consistency, knowledge or strategy?

Authenticity – and Consistency in it.

Can you describe/outline your typical day? How do you keep yourself focused and productive as a poet and writer in your day-to-day busy schedule?

Wellness is key for me. A healthy body, a healthy mind is a healthy spirit and healthy soul. I practice intermittent fasting and yoga to achieve balance and harmony between my mind and body. I ensure a work life balance so that my creative juices keep flowing. Writing is not a daily practice, reading is. Writing comes to you when it has to come, it can't be forced. When it rains, it rains incessantly and sometimes penning down the flood of thoughts becomes difficult! Poetry just happens when you feel and internalize emotions and not intellectualize them!

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What is that one message you would like to give to all the aspiring women writers or path-breakers on the occasion of International Women's Day?

RAPID FIRE

Favourite....

Place: Leh/India and Edinburg/Scotland,

Person: My late mom

Food: Vadapao

Beverage: Scotch on the rocks

Your Other Talents: Stargazing, moon watching for hours

First Love: Me myself – you can't pour from an empty cup

Favourite Quote: too many, but – We're all broken, that's how light gets in – Earnest Hemmingway.

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there.

-Rumi

Favorite character from a book- Shams of Tabrez from forty rules of love

Would like to recruit one of my poems here again,
to answer –

I want to become
a tradition that rebels
that transforms the heavens
and shakes the hells

- I want to break stereotypes
that societies force us to follow
and be a belief, an idea, a legacy, a tradition
that shakes the hell out of oppressors

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

- Child of the Dream
- Number the stars
- Walk two moons
- Harry Potter

WHAT IF ROUND

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

Love, Love, Love

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

The emotion of Jealousy – it murders humanity

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

Create a level playing field through economic parity because happiness cannot be bought, all other things can be.



RIPPED JEANS AND SOME REFLECTIONS

BY TANUSHREE GHOSH

The shredded jeans – or ripped jeans to be more apt – is taking twitter by storm. It has become expectedly political too, with calls for resignation rising from the opposing party.

A gender issue, again in a country where gender rights are dismal. But is this a gender issue? Does a certain kind of thought, or moral expectation, out of women and women only, play a part here? Or is this merely a matter of lacking communication skills while trying to make a point on the importance of proper attire?

Well, that is hard to say at this point. Even though corporates too have dress codes and India has always been rather formal in the regard of how casual 'casual Fridays' can be, he did use the example of a woman – and failed to balance that with a counter example of a man, and he did bring up the points on onus of keeping values and culture in place – which in general in India are trigger points for our long history of being gender biased on who the onus falls on.

So, although it is quite a matter that we indeed put values on who wears what (remember the incident of Sudha Murthy being judged by women on whether or not she is business class material), or it is not too long ago (and probably constant) that all major political parties typecast and degrade women (remember 'tainted and dented women?'), it is gender again lighting up the skies and not in a good way.

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But what should and can be said, and is worth making note of is does this provide an opportunity of mere posting pictures with ripped jeans on (which definitely does make a point and has the PR power of catching up virally), or should this be used for a broader reflection on a few points.

First, not just gender – but on how we do segregate caste, class, and gender by: clothes. We are all guilty of making assumptions out of first impressions and attaching those assumptions to people.

What someone wears while entering a mall, or a restaurant, the quality and style of it, is used for efficient social segregation and safeguarding. It is presumptuous to take offense when that happens to a certain segment while continuing to do the same for the lesser fortunate.



So this is an opportunity to remind ourselves of noting what someone is wearing and leaving it at just that. It is tough, but if we do care on not being judged as unprofessional or un-sanskari for our ripped jeans, we have to give that dignity back to others. If someone is wearing something we consider 'behenji' or not 'up to mark', let's remember of his or her right to do so, just as vigorously as we remember our rights to ripped jeans.

Second, taking offence where it matters the most. I might be solo in this opinion, but everyday our nation is suffering gender setbacks which are worthy of twitter storms. Those are not just this catchy.

So, it's good that I want to change the thought of one individual who obviously said something that shows his thought, but is he alone? Does it matter what he says or thinks? Will it matter even if he resigns? If he hadn't said what he said, do we truly believe that most men (and even women) holding political positions in our country are respectful of diversity, of women and their choices, and are non-judgmental?

No. It's a patriarchy and women, men, children, all – we are all conditioned and getting conditioned daily on sanskaar, values, gender roles, and gender behavior expectation. This outrage is great – only if it's targeted towards the issue, not the individual.

So, let's go ahead and post pictures on social media – but not just in ripped jeans. Let's post wearing simple sarees. Let's post wearing what no one would expect us to wear. Let's post our men in lungis and dhotis and not just suits and t-shirts. But more importantly, let's make some personal observations, and commitments to correct them.



Tanushree Ghosh

HOMECOMING... ONCE & FOREVER

BY PIYA GAJBE

Meghna flipped through the pile of documents mounted on her desk, detached and disinterested.

There was a familiar peculiarity about the ambience, the one you can feel in a typical Government Office.

The constant humming of the age-old ceiling fan, the rhythmic noise akin to that of crickets from the yellowish tube-light and the repetitive tick-tock of the wall clock filled the room with a sense of motion. In between these mechanical noises, there would be an occasional tinkering of her glass-bangles. The feminine sound of her petite presence made Gopi steal a glance at her. A place deprived of female presence for years had now become a hub of curiosity for the people of this remote village.

From the corner of her eyes, she could see Gopi's restlessness. Gopi, the self-acclaimed macho man somehow managed to secure a job in the Post Office...the first person to do so in his family.

The status of 'Sarkari - Babu' made him a superhuman in his clan; a hot property in the marriage market. Being an upper-caste privileged male, for Gopi, it was no less than a punishment to follow orders of a female officer who belonged to a lower caste. Meghna knew what hid beneath his pan-stained, half crooked smile when he used to utter 'jimadamji'...an utterly shameless lustful fantasy would drip from his voice. Carving out her authority in that narrow office, both in space and mentality, often left her drained.

'Shameless pervert...' Meghna cursed him under her breath and continued signing the papers.

Her mind was taken off from the irritating presence of Gopi by the sight of an old aluminium dabba placed on her table. Kusum kaki had brought this one for her in the morning hours. A token of love in the form of homemade nariyal burfi brought a smile on her delicate lips.

For years she had been eating in hostels or survived over the canteen food. Meghna left her own small village Khekra to fulfill her dreams. Doing all kinds of odd jobs, at times as house-help or receptionist, she sailed through her college years. A pair of cotton kurtas and cheap slippers was all she had then. However, with a strong determination, she paved her way through various exams to secure the chair of Post-Master in Gehnapur village. She gently opened the lid, as if she was scared to touch the warm feelings which were wrapped up inside the box and took a small bite. Though the roots of patriarchy and castes in that remote place left her suffocated, this kind of pure love was something which kept her going.

Kusum kaki was a frequent visitor of the old post-office. She seemed to be older than the plaster of the pale yellow walls...falling apart with time. The fine lines of time could be easily read on her face. However, there lay a story of pain and longing in those lines.

It was a year ago; Meghna had arrived at Gehnapur Village Post Office to take her charge. There was a small welcome arranged by the other three staff members. A plateful of Motichoorladdu, a single samosa and a cup of jaggery- sweetened tea seemed rather interesting to them than the newly appointed female Post- Master.

'Madamji, Post-Masters come and go... but I am here always, and now people consider me as the 'Post Office'...haha". Gopi had introduced himself with his pan-stained wide grin. "Though you are the Boss, some people might not approach you...you know the old beliefs of our society. But you need not worry. I am the man here and... then you know, I belong to their caste too... brotherhood you know. So I will handle and make things easy for you." Meghna got the message about how things work in this village on the first day itself.

Even before she could enter the office, her attention was drawn by a shrill cry.

"Oh finally you are back. My bitia has come home. I knew you would come back to shut their mouths, once and for all. Come, let's go home. I will make some nariyalburfi for you". Kusum Kaki went on saying things amidst her continued sobs.

Gopi and Mangalram took hold of Kusum. After a lot of verbal hullabaloo, she went back with her head drooping low. However, her sobs kept on coming back to Meghna.

Kusum's only daughter Rajni had left the village a few years back. She was the only girl from the lower caste who rebelled and went to school. Kusum stood like a wall with her daughter. However, with education, Rajni's dreams began to expand. Her world didn't accept the lines of division. She grew up to be one of the prettiest village damsels. The evil of patriarchy was there to make things difficult for her at every step she took. She and her widowed mother Kusum had to face the rage of Panchayat as young love blossomed between Rajni and Prakash, son of a high-caste farmer. Rajni wasn't ready to give up her dreams. She knew that her life waited beyond the boundaries of her mother's affection. She chose freedom and life.

"Mother, I have got a job in the city. I will have to go. But I will be back soon to take you away with me." With these words echoing in her ears, Kusum was still waiting for her daughter. Prakash and Rajni had eloped...never to return. Because coming back as an inter-caste married couple in this village meant a death sentence for them.

Kusum Kaki would hang around the post office peeking through the window at Meghna. One day Meghna caught her sneaking around her office.

"Please don't send me to the police. I come here just to see you...you are so much like my Rajani. I don't mean any harm."

Meghna's heart melted. Since that day, Kusum would visit her every day. Some day she would bring homegrown papaya for Meghna or sometimes it would be 'aate ka halwa' in the aluminium dabba. Meghna would visit her tiny hut occasionally and listen to her stories. Kusum Kaki showed the old black and white photographs of Rajani, her only prized possessions. How badly Meghna felt the urge to dig out the whereabouts of Rajani. But she was helpless as well as clueless. It had been seven years Rajani left the village.

Three years had passed by. The villagers were now used to the female presence in the Post Office. Meghna had earned respect and her own place too. Though Meghna aspired for a promotion at a better place or often thought about working in the town Post-Office, she was now comfortable in this zone.

One fine afternoon, Meghna received a letter from her head office. An official mail of routine transfer had arrived. She was being transferred to the city at a senior position. Her eyes gleamed with happiness. But the very next moment, a cloud of grief enveloped her. What was she going to tell to Kusum kaki? That she too was going to leave her like Rajani?

“You come along with me, Kaki. I will be getting my own quarter to live. You don’t have to stay here anymore.” Meghna looked into Kusum’s eyes with a hope for an affirmative response.

“And where will my Rajani go when she returns?” Kusum asked with childlike innocence.

“Don’t be crazy, she would have come ages ago if she really wanted to. You come along with me.”

“No, Meghna... you have your own life. Rajani chose hers. I want you to go ahead with your life. I will stay back here...waiting. This time, not for Rajani, but for you. Promise me that you shall come back once in a while to see this crazy old woman?”

Next morning as the dawn arrived, Meghana’s cab headed towards a new phase and Kusum kaki stood there waving goodbye to the dusty trail that was left behind.

After a year...

Inside Kusum Kaki’s hut, Meghna sipped the over-sweetened chai. This illiterate woman from a remote village had taught her a precious life lesson...that sometimes letting go is the best thing. Only if you know that ‘letting go’ is not always losing out.

Meghna kept coming back to meet Kusum kaki...year after year, till the crazy old woman’s last breath.

Glossary:

Dabba – Box

Nariyal Burfi – A sweetmeat made from coconut

Kaki- aunt

Aate ka Halwa – Whole wheat sweetdish

Panchayat – Local administrative body of a village consisting of five headmen.

Kurtas – A type of clothing

Motichoor Ke Laddu – A kind of sweetmeat

Samosa- Fried patties with a filling made from potatoes

Bitiya – daughter



Piya Gajbe

REFLECTION

BY GEETIKA K BAKSHI

hey there! is it you?
have you already opened the
foggy windows?
and removed a layer of pancakes
it's time to go to bed
now, embrace yourself
Pat yourself
wipe your face with wet tissue,
apply oils and portions which will
rejuvenate your inner self,
Say thanks for all and kindness
you dealt with sheer Elegance.
apologize for the bad done by you
as you ain't a Saint.
living inside the dark dome
nothing shines,
nothing could change the fate
Either it's you as a prey or the one
who slays
not worrying about the visions
and interpretations
of cruel crowd crashing your spirit

you play the violin the song of
Manhattan,
the cafe you adored for its music.

your fingers are Juvenile tips
who know the language of flowers,
now they are burnt at the endings
revealing deeper wounds,
while painting hell with the glitter of
hope.
far from grasping reality
I sleep on a dream pillow
feather touch on my cheek
wearing a red dress with firework
embroidery
these fireworks are just a reflection of
me
this is how
I feel when my reflection is staring
back at me



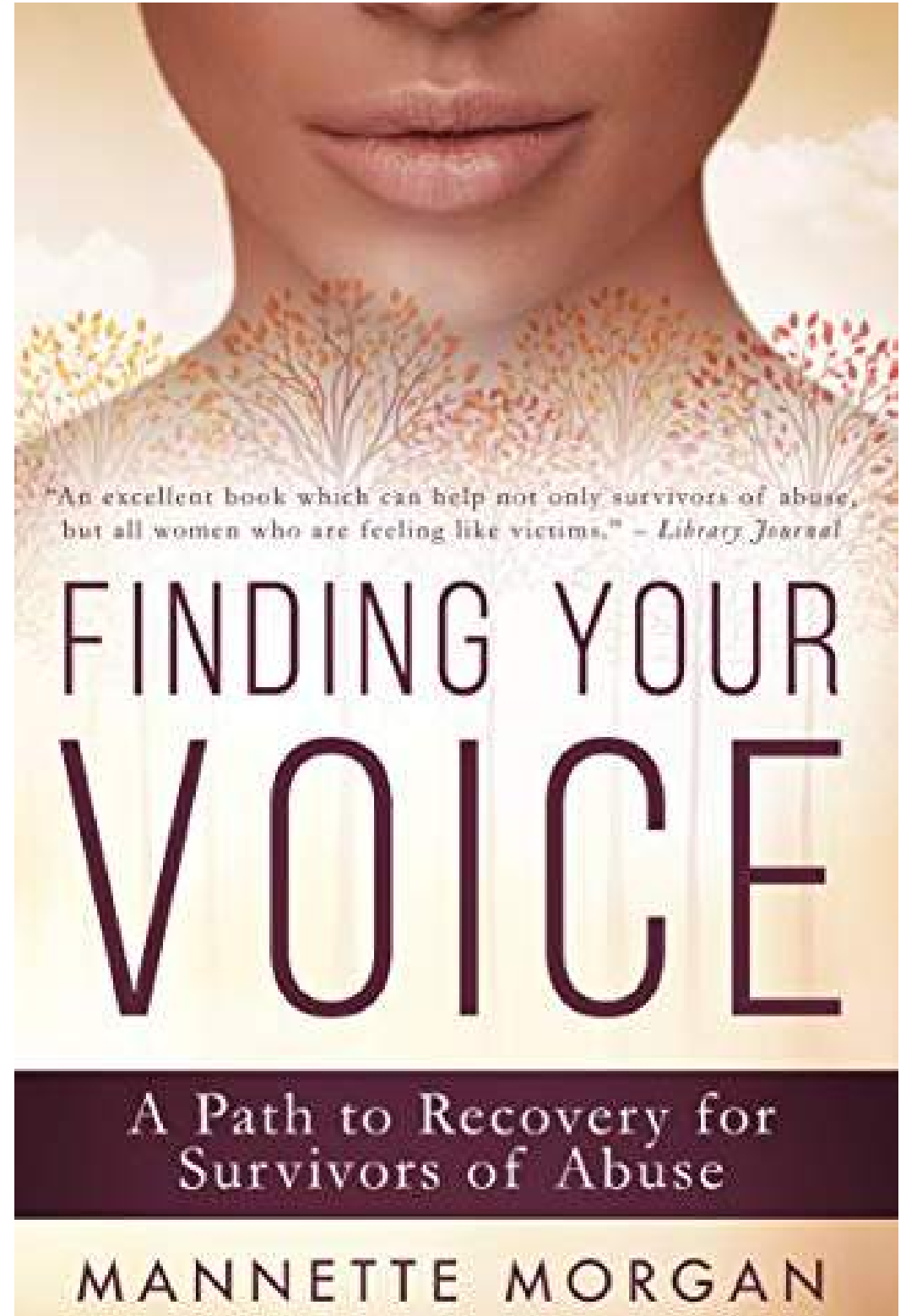
Geetika K Bakshi

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

'I looked up, down and all around, but when I looked inside, I found myself.'

Finding Your Voice is a part memoir, part guide for victims of abusive behavior. Mannette Morgan was physically abused by his cousin in childhood. She grows in fear and dysfunctional family that leads her to make individual judgments that were unhealthy. This is her journey of becoming a survivor.

This book helps to explore the origin of your pain, cravings, and the choices you made. When people are abused, they start believing that they earn it or do not deserve protection. This mindset cause hindrance towards the healing process. The author goes through the same struggle; she didn't even realize that her response caused her anxiety and disappointment rather than peace.



NAME: FINDING YOUR VOICE
GENRE: NON-FICTION
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
PUBLISHED BY: MADE FOR SUCCESS PUBLISHING
PUBLISHING YEAR: 2019
ISBN: 979-1-64146-396-6
PAGES: 313
RATING: 5 OUT OF 5 STARS

The healing journey is never comfortable because it makes us perceive the moments we don't want to relive. It is not like ripping the bandage at once; it requires time and willingness to open ourselves for a pleasant future. This book will work as your therapist, to be honest. It has different activities, questions, and avowals. You can evaluate your own progress and get back to the lessons after some time to soothe yourself.

Mannette Morgan shares five stages of healing, which I am sharing here.

First Stage - Stepping Out of Denial

Second Stage - Embrace Unconditional Acceptance, Love, and Self-Respect

Third Stage - Behaviours, Actions, and Reactions

Fourth Stage - Discovering Yourself

Fifth Stage - Discovering Happiness and Joy

I took some of the exercises that helped me understand where my anxiety, anger, and abandonment issues came from. I also started doing the Gratitude exercise, and I am hoping to see some positive results. This book is not just for survivors of abuse; it helps each and every person in general. The author enables you to embrace yourself, and once you are done with this book, you will surely gain a new perspective and clarity in your life. I would highly recommend this book.

Blurb

Finding Your Voice is a personal, comprehensive guide for survivors of abuse making the journey toward healing. Led by an author who has walked the path for more than three decades, readers will find encouragement and hope as they move step-by-step to a place of recovery.

Part memoir, part blueprint for recovery, Finding Your Voice uses a mix of personal anecdotes, accumulated knowledge, expert techniques and good, common sense to help readers navigate a new path in the aftermath of abuse.

With clear instructions and insightful examples, the author leads readers through the five stages of healing— while teaching them how to improve and strengthen their relationships - built upon the foundation of years of self-help work, therapy, and reflection, and the author's own transformative approach to healing.

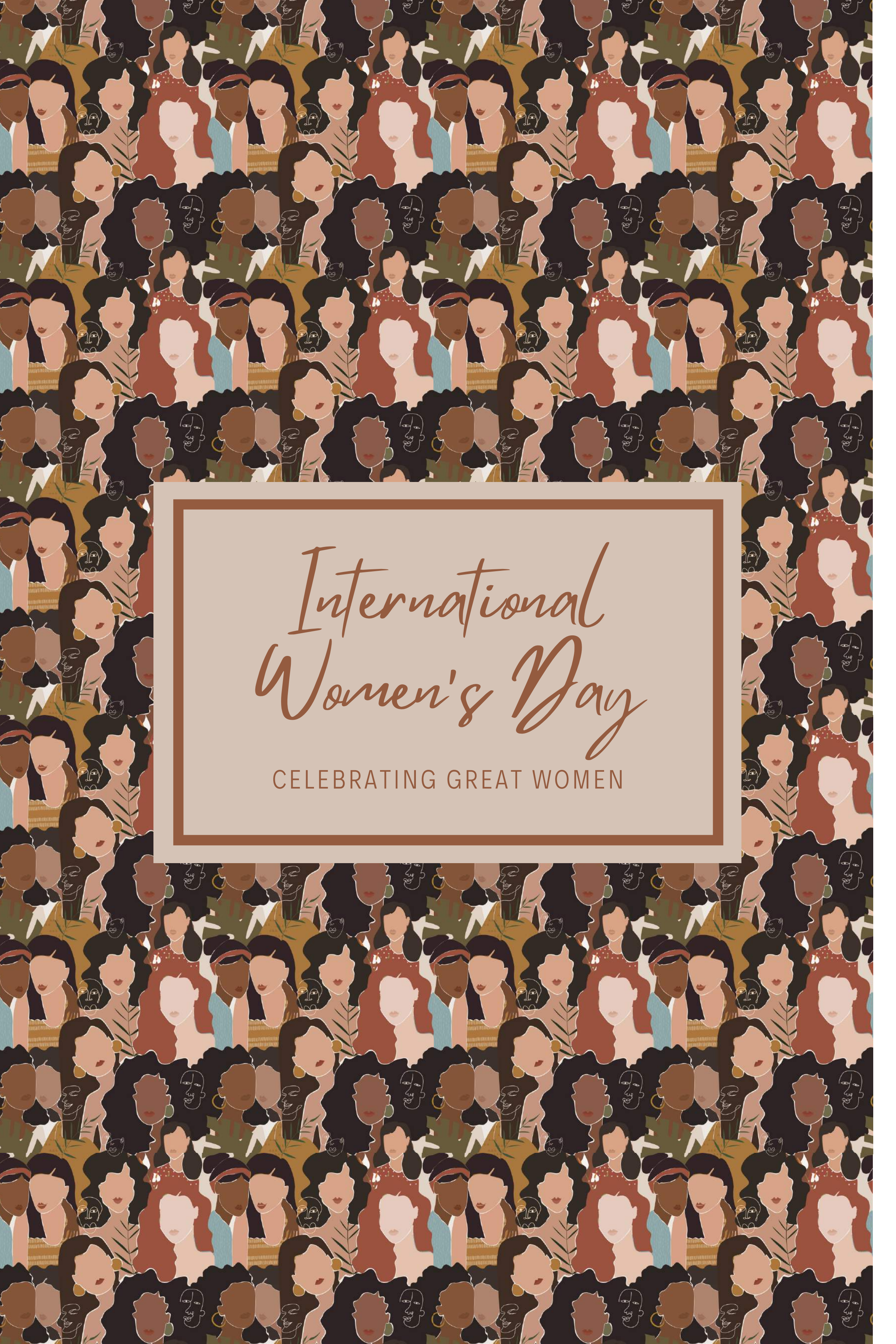
- Recognize abuse
- Embrace the Big three- Self-acceptance, love, and self-respect
- Understand how your behaviors are the key to lasting change
- Learn how to manifest your true desire
- Discover the joy you deserve by applying the "Happy Booster."

The healing journey takes time and patience. The mix of empathy, practicality, and encouragement running throughout Finding Your Voice provides the ideal guide for that journey.

A workbook is available as a companion to Finding Your Voice.

This books was originally published at - <https://www.bookscharming.com/2020/06/finding-your-voice-by-mannette-morgan.html>





*International
Women's Day*

CELEBRATING GREAT WOMEN

Fawaz Jaleel

Fawaz Jaleel is an Indian Author who has written three short stories- From the land of palaces, The Legend of Birbals Bull and Inspiring Indians. His latest short story - The Legend of Birbals Bull was featured in the Amazon Top 10 Bestsellers list for several days.

Fawaz is currently working as a Senior Brand Manager with a Hong Kong-based financial technology firm. In the past, he has worked as a consultant to the Government of India with MyGov India. He worked closely with senior bureaucrats and members of the government for several projects including PM Modi's first Townhall in India. Prior to this, he was involved with companies such as UpGrad, NDTV-Hindu and NIUM. You can write to him at hi@fawazjaleel.com and fawazjr@gmail.com

Website - <https://www.fawazjaleel.com/>

Book Link - <https://www.amazon.in/Nobody-Likes-Outsider-Fawaz-Jaleel/dp/8194958180>

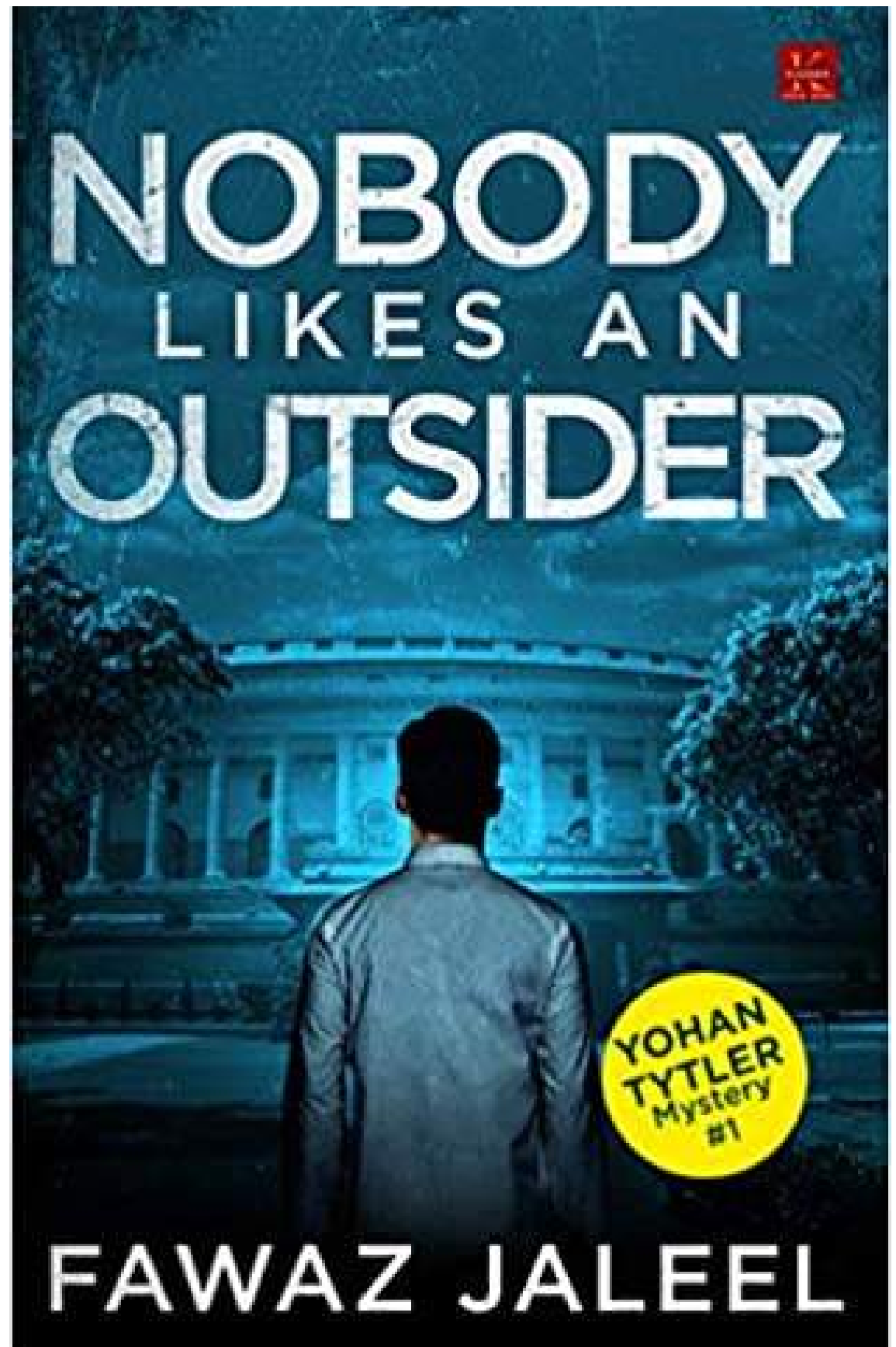


Nobody Likes An Outsider! That's the title of your debut novel. It's such a strong statement too. What is this book about?

Well at some point, most of us have been Outsiders to one or more industries. No matter how hard we struggle, it isn't easy to break in and make a mark. Nobody Likes An Outsider is the story of India's most promising young politician. After years of struggle, he starts making waves in the political scene, only to be killed in a road accident. The CBI led by the young YohanTytler along with SukumarAzhagu and IlaQureshi are entrusted with the investigation. Before they reach the scene of investigation, another murder happens. Soon, they are trapped in a quagmire consisting of politicians, powerful businessmen, intellectual mafia, religious leaders, journalists and more. As they start investigating, the team finds the murders are connected to the modern history of India and Bihar. It is an out and out investigative political thriller that will keep the readers guessing. If you love the whole detective game, this one is definitely for you.

"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.

Honestly, this is a very long list. I have dedicated an entire page at the beginning of my novel to thank most of the people. I have missed out on a lot of people and I intend to add their names in the second book of the YohanTytler series. See, this is the benefit when you write a series ;)



To sum it up, my lovely family and friends. Furthermore, I absolutely loved college life in both Madras Christian College and AzimPremji University. I think I owe a lot to my friends, batchmates, and professors. Even today, when they see me write an anecdote or an article, they would pick up the phone and call me or drop me a message. They have been a part of every minor and major event in my life. Some of my school friends too. Absolute sweethearts! It takes a lot of heart for someone to find happiness in the accomplishments of others. I have been blessed with plenty of such people.

When and how did the idea of writing stories with 'Birbal' as the main character come to you? Can you tell a bit about the kind of stories you have written and share a few lines from any of them?



So Birbal was part of my third short story i.e The Legend of Birbal's Bull. I am in awe of the magic realism genre and Midnight's Children and The Big Fish are two of my favourite novels. This short story was an attempt to experiment in this genre. Prior to this, I have written two short stories - Alternate Identities (Suspense Thriller) and From The Land Of Palaces (Romance/Drama). My plan was simple - write short stories and learn the flow of writing before attempting a novel. The feedback and experience of writing these stories really helped me when I was writing 'Nobody Likes An Outsider'.

Why Birbal? The conflict that the lead characters faced needed a solution that wasn't just temporary but one that holds but is also smart and witty. The last two words personify the great Birbal.

You have tried to touch the sensitive issue of abuse against women in one of your stories called 'The Legend of Birbal's Bull' without actually creating any female lead character. You drew a parallel from the animal world. How difficult was it to build a story like this carrying a message in itself?

One of the greatest books I have read is Animal Farm. It is also one of the best examples of allegory. The characters in the book are a bunch of animals but the book is a brilliant depiction of political power play and oppression - things that are a reality even today. Even though it was written in the 1940's using the backdrop of the Russian revolution, the premise still stands relevant. My short story is nowhere close to that classic but it is an honest attempt to speak about abuse against women without using any women characters. I guess I was too impressed with Orwell's allegory and the magic realism genre. I attempted a mix of the two with one of India's favourite mantras - Birbal! It was an extremely challenging experience and I wish I could have added more humour to it. It was on Amazon's top 10 for several days but I know I can make that story even better. It addresses a relevant issue and it is a storyteller's responsibility to pass on the message to the society in the best possible packaging.

MARCH 2021



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

Yes. Currently, I am working on two projects. There is the second installment of the Yohan series. I have already given a sneak peek into that at the end of the first book. I am developing the plot now. Apart from this, I am working on a political love story. It is a very different approach on love and what lovers have to do in the 21st century to beat social barriers and unite. I am also vetting a script for a film. That is very exciting and the discussions are absolutely enriching. I think among all of this, the second part of Yohan will come out first followed by the political and satirical love story. Fingers crossed.

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

I love numbers but I am not a 'rank guy'. My favourites keep fluctuating. At this point of my life, I believe five books that people should read are -

1. To Kill A Mocking Bird
2. 100 Years Of Solitude
3. Midnight's Children
4. 1984
5. Animal Farm

Again, these are the books I could think off at this point. Also, there are two George Orwell books in the list so I suppose he is in the Top 3. I like Gabriel Garcia Marquez too. The third... ummm... I am going to mention Agatha Christie. What a wonderful range of characters she has given us from Hercule Poirot to Miss Marple to Harley Quin, I have always been in awe of her writing. There are many more authors I adore both Indian and International and that's why it's so difficult to pick even a Top 10.

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

So my book, Nobody Likes An Outsider is about someone who didn't 'belong to' a space but managed to get inside and ofcourse a murder mystery follows. My father, Jaleel is the first 'Outsider' I have ever witnessed. I mean from where he started to what he has achieved in his life is truly an inspiration for me. I have seen him break the glass ceiling in his profession multiple times and he still continues to do so. My mother, Nasseera is a fighter. I probably get my go-getter attitude from her. She has been that person who taught me to go behind something and put your heart and soul into achieving it. Even though I grew up in Bahrain, she always put the "Indian spirit" in me and I always wanted to come back to India and live my life here. My brother, Isa is an amazing guy. He is 10 years younger than I am but can give me a tough fight when it comes to sports and discussions around it. He is going to start college this year and I am super excited for his new phase

A good story or a great marketing; what do you feel actually works when it comes to turning a book into a 'commercial success'?

RAPID FIRE

Favourite....

Place: Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai

Person: Rahul Dravid

Food: Dal Chawal. Give this to me for life

Beverage: Peach Iced Tea

First Love: I don't think I've been in love multiple times.

First Crush: School

Your Other Talents: I genuinely don't know. I enjoy a bit of everything.

Favourite Quote: JFK telling the Americans - "Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country". I think it's applicable to us too.

Favorite character from a book- Umm. There are many. Let's say Dr. Watson for now

Well it has to be a great story and great marketing. These days, writing is only half the job or even lesser. We are in a very competitive industry with quite a few big names that attract a great readership. We owe it to the readers to spring innovative stories that add value to them as well as entertains them. But then how can we reach these readers? I think a writer has to think through the whole process. You may have the greatest story in the world but if it doesn't reach the reader then what is the point? Ofcourse, there are agencies that can help authors these days. However, the author needs to plan an outline because who knows your book and audience better than you. Thankfully, I have been blessed with the right people who have innovative marketing ideas. As I speak, my friends Nitin and Philip are ensuring that even this time is used for marketing and sales. Not just them, a lot of people are showing their love and I think I have been blessed with an amazing set of friends and family. Also, I am a brand and marketing guy by profession so that helps (I guess) (wink)

Could you share few tips for young authors?

I have always believed that advice and tips are subjective. Every writer has a unique journey and there is a certain kick you get in following that. However, here are some basic things that could help authors -

- Write everyday. Just let words flow. You can always edit later
 - Have a set of friends who review your work regularly. The ones who are blunt with feedback. I love my gang for this
 - Think of marketing while you write it.
 - Let your circle know that you are writing. Give them reasons to look forward to it
 - This one is personal - Don't get too attached to your story. I agree it is your baby but please don't see it as one. Every parent loves their child beyond the flaws. Don't be that person. Treat it like a product which can be optimized further.
- If young authors want to chat before writing, I am happy to do that. Hit me up on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.

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

I think kids can start with basic comic books. Once they get the hang of reading, some of the books I would suggest are -

- Oliver Twist
- The adventures of Tom Sawyer
- The Feluda Series
- Ruskin Bond's books
- Sudha Murthy's books
- Sherlock Holmes
- The Alchemist
- Of course Roald Dahl's books
- Treasure Island.

WHAT IF ROUND

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

Books, Movies, and Food. I am assuming the tea is complimentary ;)

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

Why are you guys allowing only single digit options in your questions ;)

If I had to pick one thing, the set of 'gender roles' that have been passed on to women and men for generations now. It's the 21st century for heavens sake.

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

At this point, market my book (haha - kidding). I am a believer in social enterprises. I would want to create an international network of small scale local businesses and ensure a viable selling model for these products. Ofcourse, the larger goal being to increase jobs, quality of life, and thereby pull lakhs of people above the poverty line.

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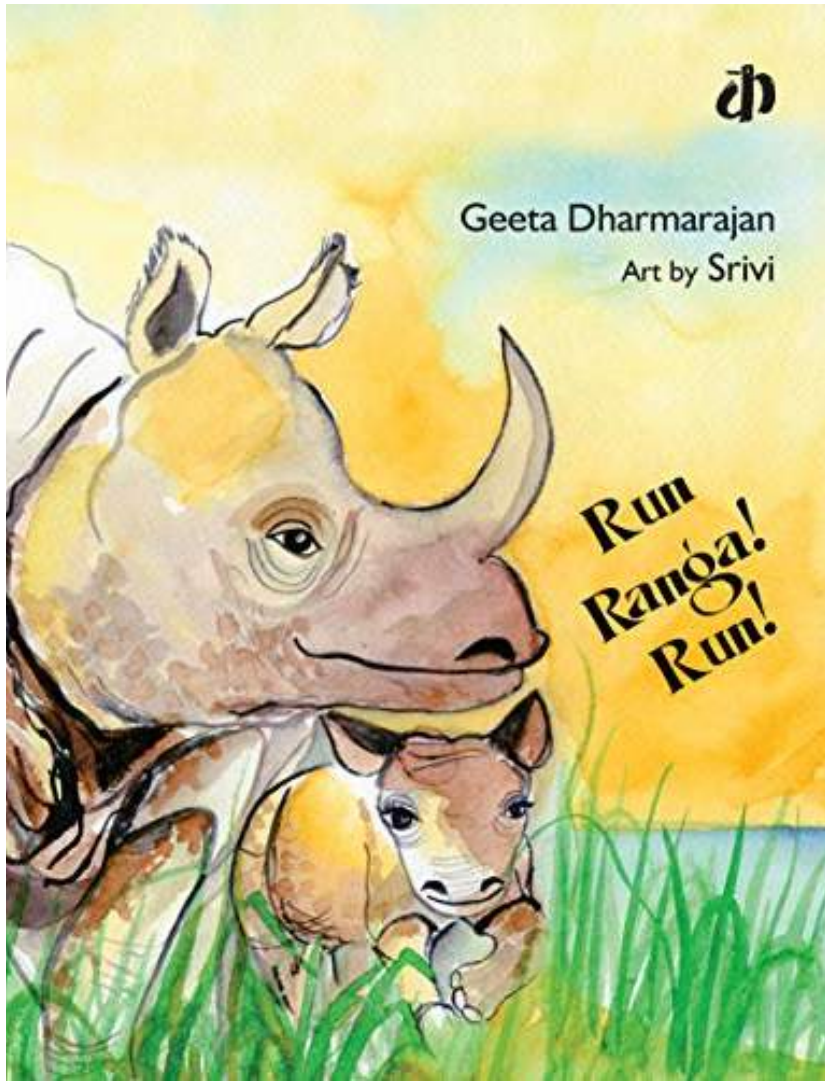
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Author: Geeta Dharamrajan

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

‘Run, Ranga Run!’

This story is about a young rhino called Ranga. She lives in grassland with her mother and learns to walk, run and make different sounds. Her mother takes a lot of care for Ranga with all the love and warmth.

After a few years, Ranga has a baby brother. Ranga wants to protect her mother and baby brother from the dangers of the wild and humans. One day suddenly her mother called out loud. She looked startled. There was a man. Her mother asks Ranga and her brother to run.

What will Ranga do? She would run away or she would save her mother?

To know more about the story read the book, ‘Run, Ranga Run!’

The illustration and the paintings are beautiful. We feel like being in the forest with Ranga while reading the book.

The book talks about how human beings destroy the wild and make animals endangered and rare. Ranga asks the reader to bring a change in humanity and make life more safe and beautiful for wild-life.

‘Run, Ranga Run!’ is a book that teaches us about family and its importance. Also, it makes us think about the animals and be kind to them.

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

- In the 1400s a law was set forth in England that a man was allowed to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. Hence we have 'the rule of thumb.'
- Many years ago in Scotland , a new game was invented. It was ruled 'Gentlemen Only... Ladies Forbidden'... and thus the word GOLF entered into the English language.
- In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes. When you pulled on the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase..... 'goodnight, sleep tight.'
- It was the accepted practice in Babylon 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer and because their calendar was lunar based, this period was called the honey month, which we know today as the honeymoon.
- In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts... So in old England, when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them 'Mind your pints and quarts, and settle down.' It's where we get the phrase 'mind your P's and Q's'
- In 1696, William III of England introduced a property tax that required those living in houses with more than six windows to pay a levy. In order to avoid the tax, house owners would brick up all windows except six. (The Window Tax lasted until 1851, and older houses with bricked-up windows are still a common sight in the U.K.) As the bricked-up windows prevented some rooms from receiving any sunlight, the tax was referred to as "daylight robbery"!
- In George Washington's days, there were no cameras. One's image was either sculpted or painted. Some paintings of George Washington showed him standing behind a desk with one arm behind his back while others showed both legs and both arms. Prices charged by painters were not based on how many people were to be painted, but by how many limbs were to be painted. Arms and legs are 'limbs,' therefore painting them would cost the buyer more. Hence the expression, 'Okay, but it'll cost you an arm and a leg.' (Artists know hands and arms are more difficult to paint)



Did You Know ?

- In the late 1700's, many houses consisted of a large room with only one chair. Commonly, a long wide board folded down from the wall, and was used for dining. The 'head of the household' always sat in the chair while everyone else ate sitting on the floor. Occasionally a guest, who was usually a man, would be invited to sit in this chair during a meal. To sit in the chair meant you were important and in charge. They called the one sitting in the chair the 'chair man.' Today in business, we use the expression or title 'Chairman' or 'Chairman of the Board.'
- Personal hygiene left much room for improvement. As a result, many women and men had developed acne scars by adulthood. The women would spread bee's wax over their facial skin to smooth out their complexions. When they were speaking to each other, if a woman began to stare at another woman's face she was told, 'mind your own bee's wax.' Should the woman smile, the wax would crack, hence the term 'crack a smile'. In addition, when they sat too close to the fire, the wax would melt . . . Therefore, the expression 'losing face.'
- Early politicians required feedback from the public to determine what the people considered important. Since there were no telephones, TV's or radios, the politicians sent their assistants to local taverns, pubs, and bars. They were told to 'go sip some ale' and listen to people's conversations and political concerns.. Many assistants were dispatched at different times. 'You go sip here' and 'You go sip there.' The two words 'go sip' were eventually combined when referring to the local opinion and, thus we have the term 'gossip.'



Chandrika R Krishnan



LET'S CELEBRATE

Contest Winners

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WINNING ENTRIES



WRITING CONTESTS FEB'2021

QUOTES & TALES

Nikita Mathur - Winner

Narayani Manapadam

Zenobia Merchant

Kokila Gupta

Ramya V

PICTURE PROMPT POETRY

Ratna Prabha- Winner

Vibhavari Bhushan

Ramya V

Priya Mani

Geetika K Bakshi

1000 WORDS CHALLENGE

Hippu- Winner

Viji

Sharda Mishra

WORD IMPACT CHALLENGE

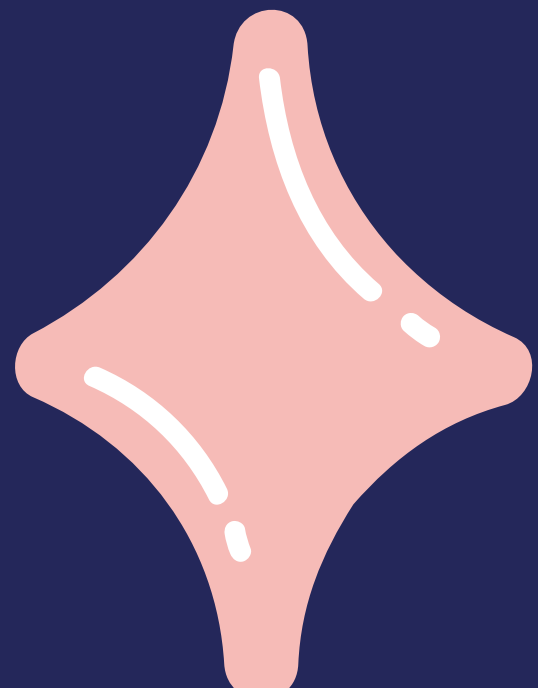
Kokila Gupta- Winner

Preeti S Manaktala

Preethi Warriar

Zenobia Merchant

Papia Ghosh



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GUPTA**



**RASHIM ROHIT
BRUTTA**

**Winner of #GuessAndQuote
Contest**





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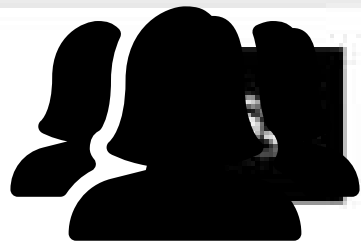
SoNailit Cancer! ***By self-love and puppy*** ***love!***

By Amrita Lahiri



***Your smile is the best
weapon against your
critics!***

By Pooja Gupta



***Swirling my magic wand, I weave my
imagination into fantasies and
beyond.***

***I keep 'pottering' my craft to give it a
fascinating waft***

**By Rashim Rohit
Brutta**

Quotes & Tales

“Nandini, why don’t you restart your car driving practice?” “No Aarav. Don’t you remember what happened the last time you taught me driving?” “It was just a slight nudge on his bike. Nobody got hurt” “No. I don’t want to kill or paralyze anybody. End of discussion”

This was a regular discussion between Aarav & Nandini and would always end like this.

“Aunty, come outside, quickly. Arnav has fallen unconscious & is not breathing” Nandini took one deep breath, grabbed the car keys, got Arnav in the back seat, and drove him straight to the hospital – nobody got killed.



NIKITA MATHUR

After working in various IT companies as a Product Manager for over 12 years, Nikita Mathur has taken a break from the corporate job. Now, she is a full-time mother, blogger, and writer and work-in-progress author of short stories for children.

The most natural way of expressing herself has always been writing down her thoughts. Practising Yoga has calmed her down and brought immense clarity in her thoughts.

Picture Prompt Poetry

SS

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When Five Became Four

*She looked down from above,
 saw the familiar dinner table set with love
 , Four little bowls each with a frugal meal,
 Enough to survive, nothing for greed.
 The sunlight from the window streamed in,
 beckoning the diners to eat therein. But the four were
 still in mourning,
 Hoping for her return to make it five again.
 She had passed never to return, her death,
 the doctors couldn't adjourn.
 She had cried when she was sick desperately wanting to
 survive,
 But now she was happy the four bowls looked fuller
 than five.*



RATNA PRABHA

Ratna is an ex-banker who is now dabbling in writing. She has been at it for over four years now freelancing as a ghost-writer. The urge to pen for herself took root a year ago and she hopes to make a foray into the world of writing with stories, poems, and retellings of myths and legends from across the world.

#1000wordstales



The Redundant Lecture

WINNING ENTRIES

"Students, what do you think should be done to solve India-Pakistan problem?"

As soon as Harsh Sir, the ninth standard History teacher asked this question he grinned. He used to grin whenever he posed witty questions to the students.

"Think and answer." Harsh Sir was not in a hurry. That was the only day after half-yearly examination and before the winter vacation. So, the class teachers were asked to keep the students engaged in their own way in this extra session. Harsh Sir's question was provocative enough to draw the attention of the class.

"The solution is that Pakistan must forget about Kashmir. They have enough problems of their own. Look at their cricket team. It's all in mess." Sandeep, the most talkative boy of the class and a cricket freak said. The class chuckled at this remark.

"Sir, we have enough power to finish off Pakistan. A war will solve this problem permanently." Ruchi, the class topper said. The whole class nodded in agreement barring Sumit, who was known for his offbeat views.

"Sumit, don't you agree?" Harsh Sir probed. According to me, India and Pakistan should become one country. Because..."

The class started booing loudly.

"When India had good batsmen only and Pakistan had good bowlers, merger could have been good idea to make the best team of the world. But now, no way." Sandeep had all cricket reasons.

"How can you think this crazy? Pakistan is bleeding us with thousand cuts through terrorism." Antara, who is good at history, retorted.

"Calm down class. If West Germany and East Germany can unite why not India and Pakistan! Let's hear him out." Harsh Sir signaled Sumit to continue.

"A merger will save a lot of money from spending on arms."

"Wow! That's an awesome Idea. Indeed India and Pakistan spend a lot of their precious resources in arms." Harsh Sir gave thumbs-up to Sumit.

"But Sir, USA spends the most on arms and India and Pakistan are nowhere close." Pallavi, who was good at dates and numbers opined.

"True. USA also exports lot of arms to countries like India and Pakistan. All countries are in arms- race. In this race, it does not matter how much arms you have, it matters how much extra you have than your competitor. Therefore, though the world has arms to destroy the whole earth multiple times, we keep piling up more arms."

"Sir, don't we need our borders to be protected?" Ruchi rhetorically asked.

"We don't choose our neighbours. If these countries are hostile, do we have any choice?" Antara too followed.

"Valid questions." Harsh Sir thought for a while. Pointing at Pawan, who was a transfer student from an adjacent state, he asked the class, "Tell me children, why we need defense forces to protect our borders from neighbouring countries, whereas we don't have similar arrangement to protect our state border from Pawan's state?"

Harsh Sir grinned again.

"This is simply because both of our states were under the same national government." Atul, who is fond of civics, responded.

"That's correct. A common government gives us that confidence. Not only among provincial states, but also among citizens. None of us move with knives and guns to protect ourselves from others. Because we know government will take care and punish those who will harm us. Government is a necessity for all challenges like security, roads and rails, infrastructure, law and order, and many more issues which is beyond the individual capacity to tackle. Am I right?"

The class affirmed, "Yes Sir."

"In that case, how about having a world government a borderless world?" Harsh Sir's eyes sparkled.

"But Sir, all the responsibilities have been undertaken by national governments. What would be role of global government?" Atul asked.

"Good question Atul. So, can all of you identify problems, which is beyond an individual country's capacity?"

"Climate change", Ruchi said.

"Global pandemic", Sandeep said.

"Terrorism", Antara said.

"Great. All these problems are better solved with a world government. Also, any international disputes between countries can be handled by the global government, instead of lingering for generations." Harsh Sir asserted.

"This will also prevent criminals from committing a crime in one country and escaping to another." Pawan reasoned.

"True. And most importantly, it would relieve countries on spending billions on military as inter-country disputes could be solved in court of law nonviolently like we do solve inter-state disputes in the Supreme Court. Isn't it?"

"Sir, isn't World Government impractical? How this will be formed? Who will do it?" Ruchi had all doubts.

"See children, in India democracy looked impractical in the pre-colonial and colonial years. How many common men had dreamt of a system in which they would be equaled with kings? Or how many kings would have thought in their wildest imagination that they would be equaled to their subjects? But under the political structure everything fell into line. But yes we needed English, as a common enemy to unite. Now as you all have said, climate change, corona virus, terrorism are good enough reasons for us to unite."

Harsh Sir continued, "But for this, we need to put our belongingness or loyalty in correct order. We need to think ourselves to be a world citizen first, then an Indian or an American, or an English, or a Pakistani and so on. This is a step forward from the current thought process, where one is appealed to think to be an Indian first, then a Bengali or a Punjabi or Tamilian or so on. For this, we of course need 'globe in mind' attitude, which will pave the way towards borderless world."

Harsh Sir took a pause and said, "Please remember the historic UNESCO Preamble, which states 'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.'"

Harsh Sir closed the session while the class thumped the desk in appreciation.



DR. HIPPU SALK

Dr. Hippu Salk Kristle Nathan is an engineer-turned-development researcher. He writes short fiction and drama in both English and Odia language. He currently teaches and researches at the Institute of Rural Management Anand, India.



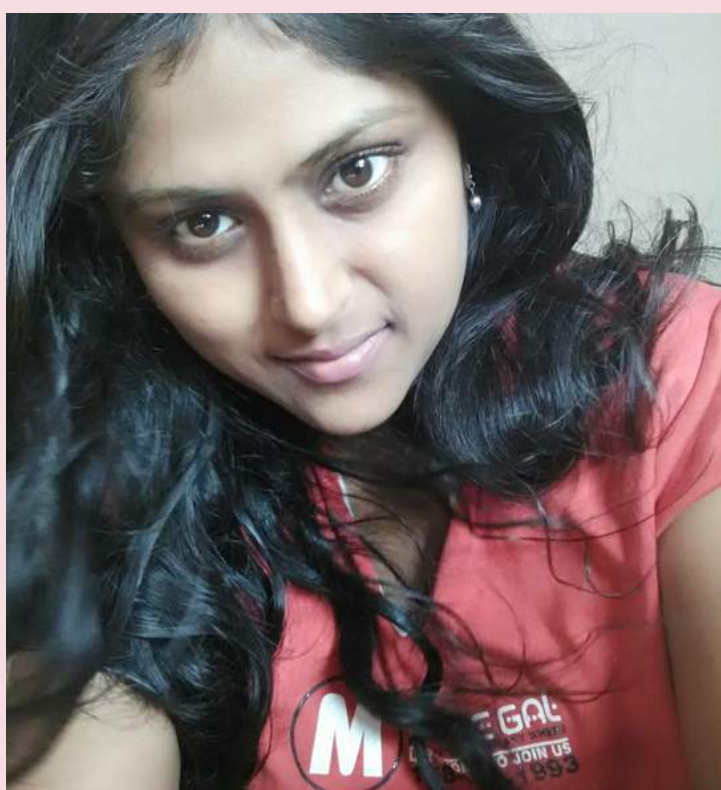
The Psychology of a Smile

Babu's pickpocketing skills were unmatched. That day, talking amiably with a client weaving applied-psychology trap, he reverently touched the gold shiva-pendant in chain around his neck before the final stealth of hand, and done! The wallet exchanged pockets.

He didn't jump-off the train, instead, like a master artist chatted-on helping the client with route-directions. The stop arrived, Rupesh the suited-booted unsuspecting client got down and flashed a grateful smile before being engulfed by the crowd.

A trifle disturbed by the friendly smile, Babu's hand crept to his neck to pay gratitude for the loot, his pendant and chain were gone.

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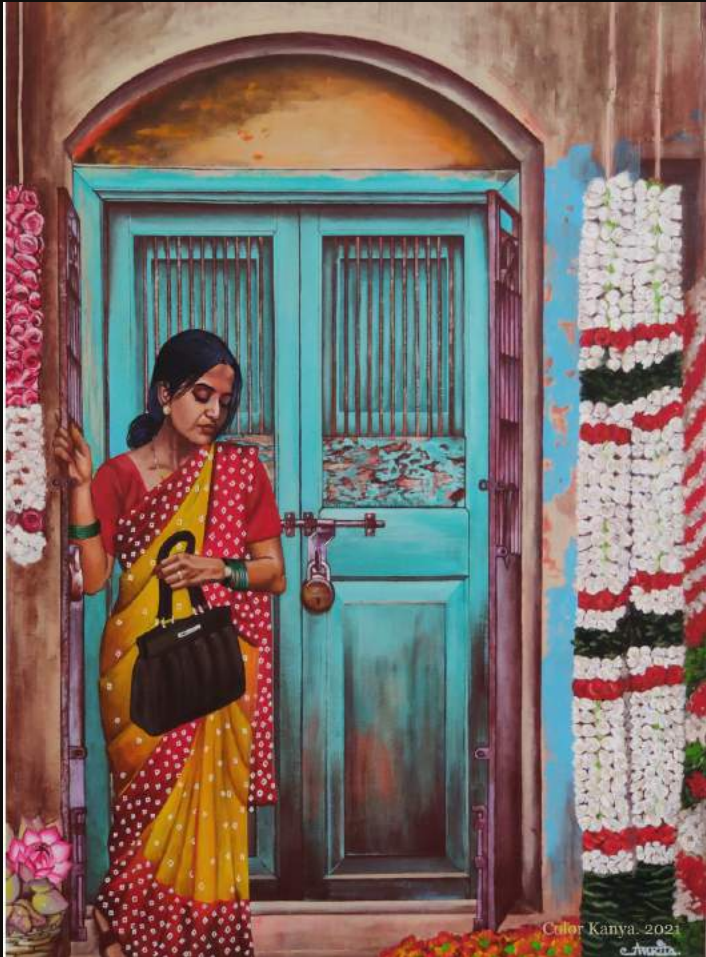
KOKILA GUPTA

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

Creative Contest

Win Exciting Prizes

Worth
60,000RS*
this season



1.

Picture Prompt Poetry

Painting Courtesy : Ankita Mohapatra

This painting by Ankita Mohapatra aka Colour Kanya, speaks to you about so many emotions, isn't it?

Pen down your version of this painting in a form of poetry and send it to us. The winning poem shall be featured in the next edition of Sharing Stories Magazine.

SS
Sharing Stories

[Click Here to Participate](#)

2.

#Quotes&Tales

“Don't you know your imperfections is a blessing?”

– Kendrick Lamar

Read the above quote and pen down a tale within 100 words based on the feeling which it evokes in your mind and heart. Spread out the message of life lessons through a beautiful story of yours.

Creative Contest

Win Exciting Prizes

Worth
60,000RS*
this season

3.

Word Impact Series

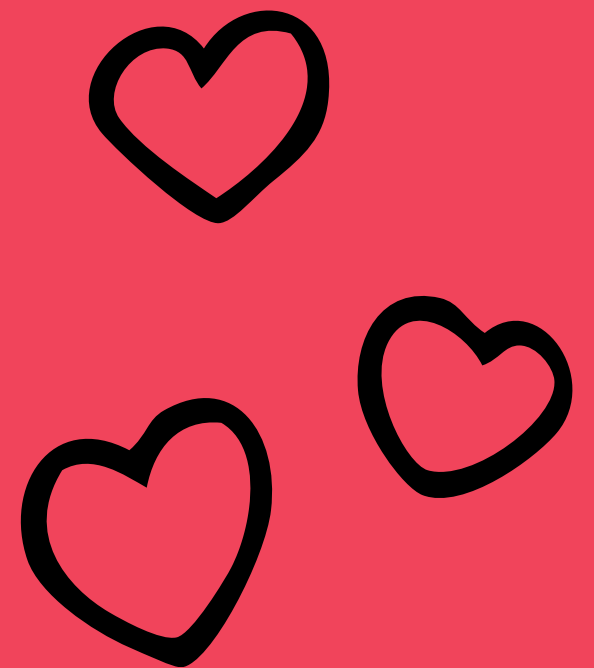
"COLOURS"

As we celebrate colours this month on Holi, think about the stories which come into your mind at the thought of colours. Pen down your creativity in 100 words around 'colour'.

SS
Sharing Stories

4.

#1000WordsTales



"However painful the process of leaving home, for parents and for children, the really frightening thing for both would be the prospect of the child never leaving home' - Robert Neelly Bellah

Write a story in thousand words around the situation where an offspring leaves home as an adult for the first time.

You can write the story from either parents POV or the Child's POV.

[Click Here to Participate](#)

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