

POCKET DIARY BOOK CLUB

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

YEAR 2023

08/01/2023

03:00 PM (Writing a 0 before 3 gives minutes a serious vibe, no funny business).

So, this is the first session of 2023, I cannot believe it. How will I? It sustained for 5 whole editions and people are not bored of books, yet. So, we added some candles this time, to make it romantic. The hero's and the heroines were sitting around the dim light as the narrator picked up the manual of a boy, called 'The Warrior of the Light'. He was an old man, or a man of old...

His voice was soft and commanding as he spoke, "The temple has many bells, and he should go to the edge of the village and listen for them. He does so but does not hear anything. A fisherman in the village tells the boy there had been a temple on the island, but an earthquake collapsed the building. Even though the island is no longer visible, the people can sometimes hear the bells when the wind whistles through the island. The boy becomes obsessed with hearing the bells and loses interest in everything else. Though teased, he never gives up faith that he will hear them one day."

Imagine him reading, with a small candle kept in front of him, sitting cross-legged, in a white short kurta with 5 brown buttons reaching up to his closed collar. Pair them with linen brown pants. Add a pair of black specs hanging from his neck.

He wore his necklace on his eyes and said, "If she ever returned, he could tell her that, although he had not seen the island, he had heard the temple bells set ringing by the motion of the waves."

"You know, typical boy behaviour", the narrator boyishly smiled and I thought, this man is younger than millennials and Gen a-z.

Reader: Yogesh, Book Name: The Manual of the Warrior of light, Author: Paulo Coelho.



I searched and I searched but **Anaro** was extinct from the world of internet. Only **Manjula Bhagat**, its author and **Mitesh**, the reader of the club who introduced her to its characters remember her now.



“DD One पे serial आता था!”

I am talking of the Classics series '[Katha Sarita](#)' every Monday night at 2130 hrs in the year 2008. But Pandit Gangadhar Vidhyadhar Mayadhar Omkarnath Shastri had left Aaj ki Aawaz and I was watching “Annu Ki Ho Gayee Wah Bhai Wah” on **Star One** that year.

Nirali wore a sea green and white stripped kaftan with ankle length leggings. It makes her look like she is back in college again. Some might think I have a crush on her. I don't. She is just looking fresh as a petal.

Reena brought **Sita - Warrior of Mithila** by **Amish Tripathi**

I did not get to write much about Reena in the past few minutes. I received acknowledgement of that fact from the source herself. I told her I will write about her today. I hope I keep my promise.

Asmita brought two male friends with her for safety. We are not goons (I joked) but I don't visit closed spaces alone either, it's an internalised “girl thing”.

Our warrior of the light met her on a ramble in the park. She was sitting under the shade of a tree (my imagination) and he was curious as to what is she reading. Twice, thrice he walked past her thinking of going up to her and ask. On the fourth turn, he stopped and asked. And that conversation brought her to this club.

She brought **Antima** by **Manav Kaul**.

The conversation moved to age. Who is young and who is old. Nirali wants to preserve her two white hairs. I suggested a layer.

Rajesh came from the mountains. And brought a unique name, “**Sab Kuch Hona Bacha Rahega**” by **Vinod Kumar Shukla**. He is a punctual man. Or an early bird. Today he came 15 minutes late, just to avoid listening to the rules. His bad luck. We repeated them for him.



3400 BCE,

“Somewhere near the Godavari River, India Sita cut quickly and efficiently, slicing through the thick leaf stems with her sharp knife. The dwarf banana trees were as tall as she was. She did not need to stretch. She stopped and looked at her handiwork. Then she cast a look at Makrant, the Malayaputra soldier, a short distance away. He had cut down perhaps half the number of leaves that Sita had.”

Reena was speaking and all of us were listening to the first chapter of her book.

I loved the new tradition of reading the first chapter for the club, it was necessary.

We all love describing the book that we bring along with us but as an audience, we cannot connect. A beginning is necessary for every story to generate curiosity. We are not cats. We won't be killed.

Then if a listener likes the book, he can read it on his own and find his own favourite paragraph to connect with.

The conversation went to variations of Ramayan (I'll skip the 'a') in different religions. There might be books out there telling the life story of Suparnakha, Mandodari, Kaushalya and Sunaina.

“Was **Kaushalya**, in her misery, never angry on her husband for binding her so with the system that did not allow her to go after her son and spend the remainder of her life in his palace? What were her thoughts?”

Nirali said “There is a Gujarati song for Sita.” And we listened:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hoAYjW4ws8>

કાયા રે કાન તમે ક્યાં ના ભગવાન તમે અગ્નિ પરીક્ષા કોની કીધી
તારો પડછાયો થઇ જઇ ને વગડો રે વેહ્યો એને લોકોની વાતે ત્યાગી દીધી
પતિ થઇ ને પત્નીને પારખતાં ન આવડી છો ને ઘટઘટના જ્ઞાતા થઇ ફૂલાઓ
પણ રામ તમે સીતાજીની તોલે ન આવો મારા રામ તમે સીતાજીની તોલે ન આવો



તમથીયે પહેલા અશોક વનમાં સીતાજી એ રાવણને હરાવ્યો

દેત્યોના બીયમા નીરાધાર નારી તો'યે દશ માથાવાળો ત્યાં ના ફાવ્યો

મરેલા ને માર્યો તેમા ક્યુ શું પરાક્રમ અમથો વિજય નો વૂટ્યો લ્હાવો

મારા રામ તમે સીતાજી ની તોલે ન આવો મારા રામ તમે સીતાજી ની તોલે ન આવો.

Nirali (also me) insisted she read more because we loved the book. Women! They can be such annoying pests.

Someone said the author used superhero's to humanise our mythological characters. I won't be surprised if Amish too missed [Shaktimaan](#). I read about the concept developed by Mukesh Khanna from our childhood mythological stories (Kundalini Yoga, VFX, Costume, Good Messages).



Nirali has trekked to the base camp of Mount Everest and plans to do so again this year with her 4/5-year-old daughter. In her journey up, they were dead on their feet when they met Buddhist monks who were climbing effortlessly and swiftly. She could almost imagine wings in their ankles.

Time went on.

“जो मेरे घर कभी नहीं आएंगे

मैं उनसे मिलने उनके पास चला जाऊंगा

एक उफनती नदी कभी नहीं आएगी मेरे घर

नदी जैसे लोगो से मिलने नदी किनारे जाऊंगा

कुछ तैरूंगा और डूब जाऊंगा”

- Rajesh Ji read it as a tribute to Pocket Diary Book Club.

Ankit read **A 1000 Splendid Suns** by Khaled Hosaini, Aditya read **કિંકર્તવ્યવિમૂઢ**, a Gujarati book. Then came **The Five People You Meet In Heaven** by Mitch Albom.

“God is dead and we have killed him”, said German philosopher **Friedrich Nietzsche**. “His book was poorly translated, inspiring Hitler”, said Sandeep. “And no amount of water can wash our hands off the blood.” The second statement is not read by people, taking pride in the murder.

He read **Notes from Underground** by Fyodor Dostoyevsky.

"To live longer than forty years is bad manners, is vulgar, immoral. Who does live beyond forty? Answer that, sincerely and honestly I will tell you who do: fools and worthless fellows.

I tell all old men that to their face, all these venerable old men, all these silver-haired and reverend seniors! I tell the whole world that to its face! I have a right to say so, for I shall go on living to sixty myself. To seventy! To eighty! ... Stay, let me take breath ..."

- He was reading Chapter I

"You imagine no doubt, gentlemen, that I want to amuse you. You are mistaken in that, too."

A person reading to us and sitting back, just listening, doing nothing, is a perfect lazy activity for a type Lazy (there is no other word for it) personality, like me.

"But what can a decent man speak of with most pleasure?"

Answer: Of himself.

Well, so I will talk about myself."

The End