

POCKET DIARY BOOK CLUB

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

YEAR 2023

19/03/2023 3:00 PM

Edition 9

'Everyone in this room will someday be dead.'

– Aishwarya.

'Hear, Hear!'

– said Everyone.

We promoted cigarettes (context समझो) and we also read a book on cancer and how to prevent it. So, this edition is not for below 18.

A trailer:

'Ladki ka naam Virjan kyun hai?' – Rajesh was perplexed.

'Who is Stephen Hawking?' – Aditya was hell bent on reintroducing him.

'Ha To, Vahi kahani fir ek baar, Majnu ne liye kapde phaad, maar Tamasha beech bazaar...' –
Ishq Tilism

Correction: *'Isme Majnu nahi marta, isme Laila marti hai.'*

and Hilori: **'In the town of Surat of India was a coffee house...'**

'Mai isi me bandh gaya bas...', sighed Rajesh.

Let us begin then:

"...Traumatic past, she was in a war-torn country, separated from her parents, she was sold as a sex slave in Menagerie. She was a skilled acrobat, she uses her skill to fight people, like use knives or whatever.

Cab also develops himself to take revenge for his brother's death. He has dual personality, one which is the dirty hands because he would do anything like literally kill people and gouge their eyes out.

"Believe it or not these people are 17 years old." described Soumya.

So much to write in their CVs already, I am 28 and have only dreamt of killing and not leaving any evidence, I cannot even cut an onion in tiny pieces without crying.

Book: ?



We ordered a foaming cup of bitter cappuccino at 'The Coffee House of Surat'.

Hilori reading the book, "...Where many travellers and foreigners from all parts met and conversed. One day a learned Persian theologian visited the house..."

From Neha's diary:

Story of a theologian researching about God; loses his marbles and gives up hopes on the concept of God, turns into an atheist. Banished from Persia, he reaches Surat with his slave and orders opium at our cafe in Surat. And a conversation begins between him and his slave regarding what god means to him which turns into a full-blown conversation in the entire cafe...

Priya (me) & Nirali were communicating with our eyes.

आँखों की गुस्ताखियां माफ़ हो।



...

Moving on from **Leo Tolstoy**, Ruchi brings **Rebecca**.

Nirali: इसका मुझे सबसे अच्छा डायलाग ये लगता है¹, "All Happy families resemble one another, but each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

Some Russian play happened. Word play.

I love the name of **Alfred Hitchcock**. He directed the 1940 movie version of the book. I hope someone will ~~validate~~ confirm my belief that it would be a good film to fall for.

...

We moved from Percy Jackson to rejecting him for **Harry Potter**...

I am writing these conversations from audio recording of the edition, I can hear Rajesh Ji, sometimes Ankit, mostly Ruchi. It is difficult to locate the introverts. Where are they?

Writing minutes from an audio recording makes me want a cassette and a [Walkman](#), listening to misted conversations of human beings somewhere, recorded in some past, and I am trying to decipher their life, a slow burn movie with flashbacks, some in black and white, maybe some in colour, depending on my budget of course.



Ankit loves rules, me thinks. He reads **40 rules of love** (novel in a novel, Nirali loves this style)

$$10x + 10y - 10 = 40$$

From Neha's diary:

One of the most beautifully written pages in the book. The protagonist turns 40 and is like just another human being these days, going through an existential crisis, trying to answer questions we ask in meditation; where is her life leading her, what has she done for herself, what she wants from life, is what she has enough in spite of being in abundance...

¹ <https://indiatyping.com/index.php/hindi-typing> का इस्तेमाल किया गया है।

I wish we all had the answers.

Tribute to the members standing like statues because this edition, the hall ticket keeper said, 'picture housefull hai.'

But Not Van Gogh is reading from Kuldip Nayar.

There are sweet readers like **Ms. Praful Ba** who come to visit, just to meet and greet us. She and Nirali had been communicating back & forth and she told her about how much she wanted to be part of Pocket Diary Book Club.

Neha: Man the Unknown - Dr Alexis Carrell

I always google the book, ~~bad~~ habit. So, I was skimming google reviews and what was funny/weird (whatever): 2 amazing reviews but with one star, makes me wonder about the S factor (sarcasm or stoned).

From Neha's diary:

It's a Lullaby².

It talks about a man's desperate attempts to understand the man psyche using all the tools and techniques available to him; anatomy, physiology, physics, chemistry and all that's inside the box.

It's a paradox. We know that what we know is because we have cut open and taped close our bodies, then searched and researched it in nature, by our own hands and noses, using human senses, to understand, who are we?

If you need a coat in your wardrobe, you open the wardrobe and you look inside it. You also use the door to the wardrobe to search for Narnia.

This book has a very unusual charm for those who are inclined to scientific and medically proven facts³ to understand the human psyche.

Mitesh: वरदान (Contd. from previous edition but we forgot the story, I think)

"...सुवामा रोमांचित हो गयी। उसका हृदय धड़कने लगा। आज बीस वर्ष के पश्चात महारानी ने उसे दर्शन दिए। वह कांपती हुई बोली 'जो कुछ मांगूंगी, वह महारानी देंगी?'..."

And marriage plus a few months⁴ later, Pratap was born.

Theme (the angle we explored/were very interested in): Tragic love

Neha says, it's a quadrilateral. I need a more romantic word. Foursome. It will sound crude only if you imagine it: Pratap, Vrijrani/Virjan, Kamlacharan, Madhvi.

² You can sing it to sleep.

³ Doctors, Pharmacists, Sceptics love this book. Researchers fall in the intersection.

⁴ Maybe magic or maybe 9



<https://www.arvindguptatoys.com/arvindgupta/premchand-varadan.pdf> (यह पुस्तक प्रकाशनाधिकार मुक्त है क्योंकि इसकी प्रकाशनाधिकार अवधि समाप्त हो गयी है।)

कथा की नायिका और प्रताप बचपन से एक दूसरे से प्रेम करते थे। वह ऐसे दो प्रेमी जो बचपन में साथ-साथ खेले, किन्तु उनकी कल्पनाओं का महल शीघ्र ढह गया। नायिका की शादी किसी और से हो गयी। शीघ्र ही प्रताप ने भी शादी कर ली। दोनों ही अपनी घृस्ति बसा कर रहते थे पर दुर्भाग्यवश नायिका के पति का दिहांत हो गया। वह इतने सालों बाद प्रताप से मिलने गयी परन्तु किसी और को उसके जीवन में देख सेहम गयी। अंत में वह अपने प्रेम का जश्न एक साथ तो नहीं बना सके परन्तु उनकी प्रेमकथा अमर हो गयी।

From Neha's diary:

Madhvi becomes Sadhvi. She waits for this unrequited love for some odd 20 years and hence the dialogue. Tapasvini turns into Yogini. She sings love songs and just like Shri-Krishna ki murlī, was captivating. All her love song/stories moved people. She-Krishna.

P.s. A very stupid intense discussion to know the details of the love story began as Rajesh wanted to know **the meaning of Virjan**. Mitesh says that it's a very sad story as Pratap realises his love for Madhvi but sadly, she is now a sadhvi and Virjan dies.

Aditya: Stephen Hawking

'I hope you all know who is, was Stephen Hawking?'

'Yes'

'But I shall tell who he was.'

'But we know.'

'Listen.'

From Neha's diary:

Real science is stranger than the strangest fiction. What we deduce and derive is the answer of the most-deepest and most **primordial** fiction seated in our brains. Hawkins goes on to emphasise the importance of looking at earth as a unity of existence, one planet one human race.

Of course, we drifted. Of course, we talked about Time Travel. Of course, Interstellar references were discussed. Of course, **H. G. Wells** Time Machine was mentioned.

And who designed the wheelchairs...

Soumya: Crooked Kingdom – Duology

After Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings, I feel I had my glass of magical realism overflowing.

This one brings magical realism back and again the teens aged 17-19 are moving mountains and again there is a very plain mundane concept of betrayal, bravery, courage and cowardice peppered and tempered with magical elements. Someone (**Yug**) suggested people who have read Percy Jackson may relate with this particular duology.

Ruchi suggested Gentleman Bastard at which everyone suddenly had some surge of energy and wanted to know more and wanted me to note it down specifically.

Scott Lynch - The Gentleman Bastard Series

The Lies of Locke Lamora,
Red Seas Under Red Skies,
and *The Republic of Thieves*

New members, laughing along, joining the ride, but don't be fooled by their jolliness, they bring Cancer⁵. Thy name is **Hardik** and he believes in killing it.

Book: Killing cancer not people by Robert wright

Strong Medicine: Yogesh Ji suggested a book that deals with practices in medicine.

Rajesh Ji: Ishq Tilism - Puja Upadhyay

“इतराँ, उसका गाँव तिलिसमपूर, उसका रूद्र, उसकी नब्ज में सुनाई देती चिट्ठियाँ, कई सारी कहानियाँ, उस की दादी सरकार...हवा में जादू घुल रहा था। सब कहानी में खो गए थे।

किसी ने मोबाइल निकाल कर विडीओ नहीं बनाया, फ़ोटो तक नहीं खींचे। किसी ने नोटिफ़िकेशन नहीं देखे। एक घंटा हो गया था। कहानी में मोक्ष की एंट्री हो गयी थी। कुलधरा में। मेघ रंग आँखों वाला मोक्ष।

बारिश के दिन इतरां से सिगरेट माँगता। काँधे पर के टैटू,
'तत् त्वम असि' से लिखता सवाल, तुम वही हो, जिसकी मुझे तलाश है?"
मैंने सुनने वालों से पूछा, 'ब्रेक चाहिए? चाय, कॉफ़ी, खाने को कुछ?'
किसी को कुछ नहीं चाहिए था। सिर्फ़ कहानी सुनने आए थे लोग।

- http://laharein.blogspot.com/2023/03/blog-post_21.html

All we heard was Barish, Bike, Beedi aur Bhuri Ankhein...

(This sentence is tedha like ladka, ladki and us listeners)

If you find listerine colored eyes, please inform. It's important.

Yash & his White Tiger from Bihar

During summer holidays, sitting on a sofa, I have watched Crime Petrol continuously for 2 days and 2 nights with rape, murder, gang rape, gang murder and hiding the body and betrayal amongst each other to avoid Section 34, IPC. My mom, aunt, cousin & I only stopped when a statue theft episode came on. '*Ye to boring hai.*'

I quite understand the appeal of murder and what next?

But Yash was afraid to be the one who breaks us out of the romantic spell we were all happily bubbling in, understandably. He tried to 'donate' his time to Rajesh but... we leave no one.

It takes courage to murder and then feel no guilt, चाचा विधायक है हमारे

⁵ What's your Rashee?

While reading it post the session, I kept waiting for that Bihariness⁶ to enter the chapter. I felt FOMO⁷.

Author gives the feel of Lord Macaulay, we are enamoured by his work but we realize our fallacy too late, the stories about darkness (Bihar) are nauseatingly true but the personality traits of Balram are not local.

A lot of pages describe a lizard, a paan spit, and it repeats, unlike being a setting. We get it. India is dirty. Any reader sitting in another country will also get it, beyond the 'subliminal' pushing to sell author's new definition⁸ of 'rooster coop'. What next?

<https://kenyonreview.org/kr-online-issue/2009-winter/selections/review-of-aravind-adigas-the-white-tiger/>

The author's lack of research is a joke made on him by Bihari's seriousness to exercise their right to vote but despite all this, there is a guilty pleasure. The protagonist commits a murder which gives rise to a sense of newfound freedom and existential identity. He breaks free, there is no guilt, there is a selfishness we love because, someone did something about their frustration, we can't. Can we?

Yug: Homo Deus

"...After all, what's the advantage of humans over chickens? Only that in humans information flows in much more complex patterns than in chickens. Humans absorb more data, and process it using better algorithms..."

... Its second commandment is to connect everything to the system, including heretics who don't want to be connected."

Heretics: The Right to Privacy.

<https://www.wired.co.uk/article/yuval-noah-harari-dataism>

P.s. he was pretty happy to be a part of our book club.

Shaurya is a research-oriented person. He believes in finding a scientific solution to all our problems. So he said, you ask me a close ended question, I'll randomly open a page and give you the answer.

I must say, he has proven his skills.

Q.: How is yellow colour made?

A: Ask your mother.

⁶ Biharipian sounded rude; Bihariness shows some love

⁷ I heard it from someone who told me I am old, so I learned the shorts to prove I am not young and gain respect.

⁸ Need research to verify origin of the concept

Q. What is the square root of Pi?

A: It could be extraordinary.

Q. Question not suitable

A: Settle it soon.

<https://www.myanswersbook.com/>

Yogesh Ji: Not a penny more, Not a penny less

This is Jeffrey Archer's first book.

Category: Thriller

Question: When four men lose their life savings to a wealthy Boston swindler in a stock market scam, how will they get their money back?

Plot: The police know it, but they can't prove it. 'Sorry Don.'

So, what does the don do?

He talks to the author who gives him a plan, How to get revenge without charging per day interest?

Step 1: Find other victims.

Step 2: Make allies or friends.

Step 3: Teach them: "Don't get mad, get even!"

Step 4: Define and execute the goal.

What is the goal?

Recoup exactly the \$1 million they collectively lost, and that is the title of the book.

Abhishek: The Namesake

May God Bless Him

*"On a sticky august evening two weeks before her due date, **Ashima Ganguli** stands in the kitchen of a Central Square apartment, combining Rice Krispies and Planters peanuts and chopped red onion in a bowl. She adds salt, lemon juice, thin slices of green chili..."*

- Chapter 1, read by Abhishek from the beginning because he too is a fresh reader of this book, crafted by **Jhumpa Lahiri**.

*"...He carried a single volume for the journey, a hardbound collection of short stories by Nikolai **Gogol**, which his grandfather had given him when he'd graduated from class twelve. On the title page, beneath his grandfather's signature, **Ashoke** had written his own..."*

*"... "Hello, **Gogol**," he whispers, leaning over his son's haughty face, his tightly bundled body. "Gogol," he repeats, satisfied..."*

He was reading the book for the first time, opening it at the club. So, he started with the first page and I was seeing that train journey, Ashoke in round glasses a mess of curls, talking to his journey neighbour about travels and books.

From Neha's diary:

Kusangi and The Five Love Languages

It's a case study of people falling in and out of love and the reasons why the falling happens. Find a way to communicate, to come to a common ground and making sure that the people involved are on the same page. Rajesh ji had a particular query when it came to the physical touch as one of the love languages.

Neha! What was the query?

Bharath: I saw him sitting patiently and listening whole heartedly to the entire session. He brought along **Factfulness** by **Hans Rosling**. **Hitesh** brought **Do epic shit**. He had 3 minutes. Prince read from To Kill a Mockingbird.

If some are left out. What can I say, I am a Homo Sapien. Go blame Neha.

Extra snippets:

Death comes after love – Yash. *Life is not life and death, Life is life and life* – Yogesh.

Nirali, the editor: PDBC⁹ work is like, *kuch ishq kiya kuch kaam kiya...*

