

POCKET DIARY BOOK CLUB

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

YEAR 2024

17/03/2024 3:00 PM

Edition No. 31

Written by Ruchi. Edited by Bharath

Venue: Akshat Drama Group Studio

Shaurya starts the session by distributing ~~(secret) tickets to outer space~~ postcards. They're postcards.

Prince brought **Just Checking** by **Emily Colas**, a book about OCD. This is the first time I've heard someone write about their first-hand experience with OCD. The wonders of expression on paper.

"Paper is more patient." - The Diary of Anne Frank

"I bar practical jokes before breakfast," exclaims Bertie Wooster in **Sambhav's** reading of **My Man Jeeves** by **P.G. Wodehouse**.

Shankar spoke of the irony of drone clubs in Wodehouse books.

'A drone being a male bee that does no work, living off the labour of others, it aptly describes the late 1920s to early 1930s stereotype of rich, idle young club members, though some of them have careers and even jobs.'

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drones_Club

Bharath summarizes the commotion. 'Basically these books are FRIENDS episodes. You can pick them from anywhere.'

Karan reads from **Saurashtrani Rasdhar, a collection of folklore from Saurashtra by Javerchand Meghani**. He reads *Marashya Ni Moj*, a story of the grief of the requiems sung by people after their loved one's funerals. Two lines touch me the most, whose English translations are :

"Now that you're gone, there's no one for me to hug."

"Everyday lived without you is a rent I pay for the rest of my life."

After such heart-touching lines, the husband decides to inform the wife that he wasn't actually dead. Just pretending to be, to which the wife rightly asks him to go away because why should she go through the pain of mourning him twice? (Is this funny or what? Playing with someone's emotions to gauge how sad would they feel once you're gone? I don't know.)

Nija reads from **Think Like a Girl by Tracy Packiam Alloway** which explains the psychology of thinking biases in men and women. It seems more like "think like a human" to me. Clickbait titles, I tell you.

Jay takes us to the heists of **Lies of Locke Lamora**, the first book in The Gentleman Bastards series by **Scott Lynch**.

"I only steal because my dear old family needs the money to live!"

Locke Lamora made this proclamation with his wine glass held high; he and the other Gentleman Bastards were seated at the old witchwood table... The others began to jeer.

"*Liar!*" they chorused

"I only steal because this wicked world won't let me work an honest trade!" Calo cried, hoisting his own glass.

"*LIAR!*"

"I only steal," said Jean, *"because I've temporarily fallen in with bad company."*

"*LIAR!*"

At last the ritual came to Bug; the boy raised his glass a bit shakily and yelled, *"I only steal because it's heaps of fucking fun!"*

"*BASTARD!*" "

Shreya reads from **The Hidden Life of Trees by Peter Wohlleben**, which is more of a wondrous non-fic fantasy rather than a proper, well-researched non-fiction book. Or as Prince exclaimed, 'There is nothing more human than projecting human elements on non-human things.'

Speaking of non-human things, I noticed a cockroach (Bharath's note: probably wasn't a cockroach; but close enough. Ruchi's note following Bharath's note: Keeda tha koi. Bas?) has made its way into the edition without paying for the ticket. Mantra flicks it like a carrom striker. He is scared of cockroaches, he clarifies. At this moment, I'm so glad we are not the ones he's scared of.

Mantra brought **Dante Alighieri's The Divine Comedy** (Bharath's note: and to be fair, *La Divina Commedia* as well). For the first time in PDBC, he reads the original verses in Italian, then reads the English translation. Bharath summarizes this series as something Dante wrote as a fanfic for his girlfriend. Toh ye sab tab se chalta aaraha hai. Chalo fir apne generation ko blame karna bandh karein.

Mantra also has an inside joke on this book:

" 'Why did Dante not get misplaced in hell?'

‘Because even the Devil couldn't replace such a verbose guide!’ ”

Janvi reads from **Gulzar's Raat Pashmine Ki** about the chronicles of a *Buddha Dariya* (lit. old river). We go back to the topic of anthropomorphism. Shaurya gets lost in the maze of his mind, looking to dissect the logic behind the *Buddha Dariya*.

Nija gently places the cockroach (the keeda) on a piece of paper and kicks him out. Next time ticket leke aana.

Manish reads from **Stephen Hawking's A Brief History of Time**. A debate ensues between Saganians and Hawkingnians (I made those up. Please don't banish me, Sagan and Hawking.) The conclusion came in favor of Sagan being more of a layman-oriented science fellow vs Hawking being a purist.

Sudhanva read from **Himalayan Quest**, a picture book, **by Ed Viesturs and Peter Potterfield**. "Tasveerien kheechna zaruri hai kyuki aayne guzra hua waqt nahi batate," he quotes an Insta post, on the importance of pictures. (Bharath's note: this roughly translates to 'it is important to take pictures, because mirrors do not recount time which has passed.')

Aishwarya reads from **A Book of Simple Living by Ruskin Bond**, which again causes a discussion to ensue on the topic of climate change. Shaurya speaks of the importance of keystone species in nature.

‘In a marine ecosystem, or any type of ecosystem, a keystone species is an organism that helps hold the system together.’

<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/keystone-species/>

Juhi reading from **The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared** gives me a sense of calm. I cannot stop listening to her read.

Shankar brings an old copy of **Graham Greene's An Honorary Consul**. He said he stole it from the British Library. Well, if it's stealing from the British it's taking back what's yours, not stealing.

Bharath's note:

A character called Aquino in his book talks a lot about death and attributes it to love and death being the only two subjects for a man.

Me? I'm busy not trying to shit my pants. I've read **Stephen King's Pet Semetary**, the



only book that has managed to scare me more than reality.

“And the most terrifying question of all may be just how much horror the human mind can stand and still maintain a wakeful, staring, unrelenting sanity.”

Priya's P.S.: Janvi made bookmarks for PDBC.

I remember she was making bookmarks on 18.02.2024 when we were running Edition 30, the last edition before the Dehradun retreat, but [to think] she would make so many, and each of them is beautifully made, finishing and detail work... I am amazed and humbled by the hard work put in these.

