POCKET DIARY BOOK CLUB

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

YEAR 2024

08/09/2024 03:00 PM

Edition No. : 41

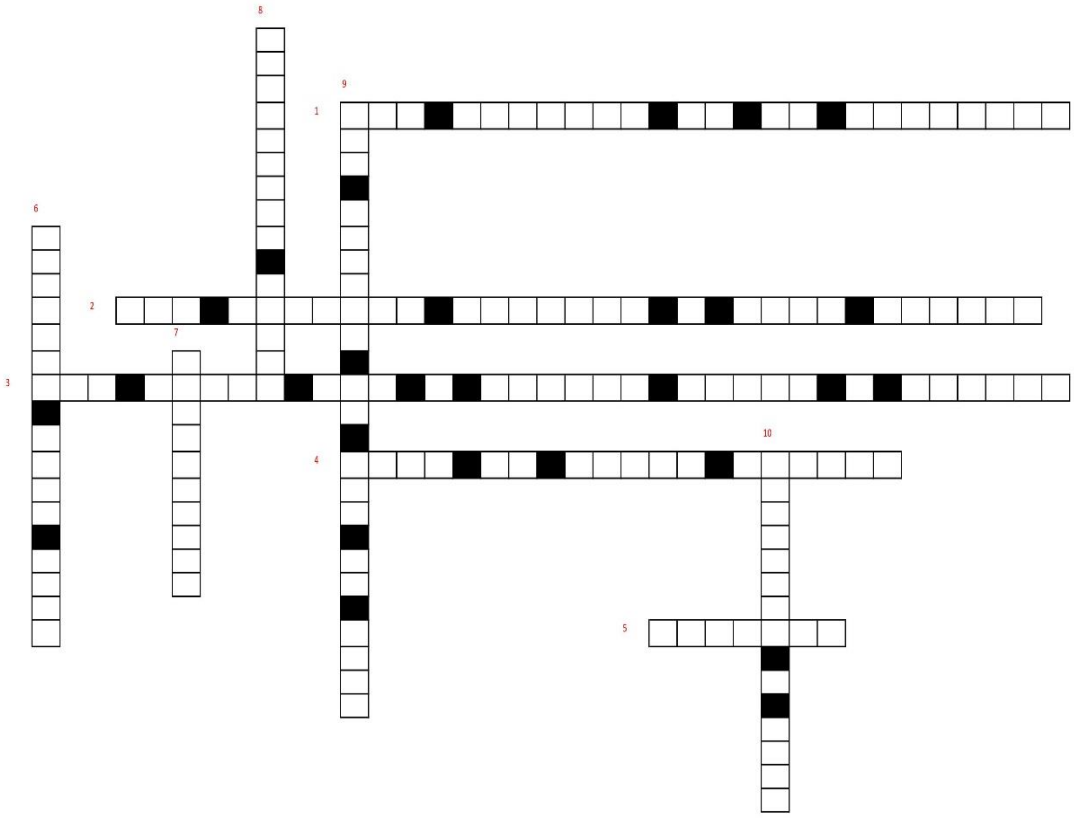
Venue: Akshat Drama Group Studio

Facilitators: Mitesh & Priya

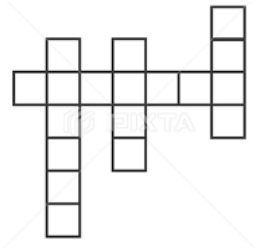
Written by: Tanvi

Edited by: Priya

Theme: Crossword Special



This edition kicked off with a special crossword challenge, which initially left everyone scrambling to figure out the clues related to book titles. However, what began as an individual effort soon turned into a collaborative one. Rohan started referring to the PDBC booklist, which was then shared with the group, leading to the final answers being cracked.



Rijuta captivated us by reading a beautiful passage from **The Forty Rules of Love** by Elif Shafak. The passage explored the theme of love and perception, expressing how the true beauty of an individual can only be seen through the eyes of a lover. She emphasized the profound line, “One must see Laila from the eyes of Majnu,” and her delivery was both heartfelt and poetic. After Rijuta finished, Priya played a song from the movie Laila Majnu, perfectly complementing the reading. This sparked a lively discussion, with many members, including myself, vowing to add the movie to our watchlists.

Then, I shared a passage from **Pet Sematary** by Stephen King. The scene involved a father explaining the concept of death to his five-year-old daughter, who is terrified of losing her beloved cat. The vulnerability of the child and her fear of mortality resonated deeply with Meghna, who reflected on how hard it would be to part with her own pets in the future. This led to a broader discussion on death, with Abha sharing a personal story from her childhood. She recalled wishing her baby brother would sleep forever, only to be harshly reprimanded by her mother. At the time, she hadn’t understood why, but the significance of that moment only became clear to her as she grew older. **Mitesh** then lightened the mood by recalling a humorous memory from his own childhood, where he once lifted his baby brother and jokingly said, "Ram Naam Satya Hai," causing the group to burst into laughter.

Next, **Rohan** narrated a humorous excerpt from **Me Talk Pretty One Day** by David Sedaris. The passage had everyone smiling, especially when the protagonist, reluctant to play his guitar, quipped, “He wanted me to jam, so I jammed it in my closet.” This led to a playful conversation about naming guitars, with a particular guitar on the PDBC library wall remaining sadly nameless. As if the humor weren’t enough, a discussion on the book **Yellowface** ensued, where someone asked, “Is it about emojis?” I couldn’t contain my laughter.

Kiranjot's recitation of **Banarasi Saree** by Kaka Hathrasi followed, and her delivery did complete justice to the poem. Her lively narration had everyone smiling, and this naturally led to a discussion about the simplicity of art and its ability to capture everyday experiences, bringing joy to people's lives. The group reflected on the idea of "art for art's sake" as Rijuta introduced Varun Grover's work. She shared a short story he wrote about Karijwa, a Banarasi rasgulla, and the lengths a young boy went to in a post-apocalyptic world to taste it. Meghna added that her favorite thing about Varun Grover, however, was his cat.

Abha's rendition of Mark Antony's speech from **Julius Caesar** was nothing short of theatrical. She came prepared, complete with a gold tiara, fully embodying the character. Her dedication drew admiration from everyone, and the speech sparked an insightful discussion about the power of oration and the early origins of democracy in ancient Greece and Rome.

Anushri captivated the room with her selection from **Brotherless Night** by V. V. Ganeshananthan, a deeply moving narrative set during the Sri Lankan civil war. The passages she chose skillfully highlighted the ethical complexities faced by doctors who, regardless of their own beliefs, were compelled to treat patients on both sides of the conflict—even Tamil Tigers. Her reading wove together different moments from the book, offering a snapshot of how deeply personal and political the story becomes as it unfolds.

Akanksha then read excerpts from **What You're Looking for is in the Library** by Michiko Aoyama, a charming book that fit perfectly with the theme of the day. The characters' search for meaning mirrored our own search for crossword answers, all of which were found in the PDBC Library itself. Akanksha spoke about how deeply she related to the characters and highlighted the transformative power of books, leaving us all feeling reflective and poetic.

Meghna read from **Tuesdays with Morrie** by Mitch Albom, a heart-wrenching account of a terminally ill man's reflections on life and death. Her reading was emotionally charged, with pauses between passages that allowed the weight of Morrie's words to sink in. The line "Why are we embarrassed

by silence? What comfort do we find in all the noise?" left a lasting impression on me. On a lighter note, **Gautam** joked about proofreading his own eulogy, which brought some much-needed levity to the somber mood.

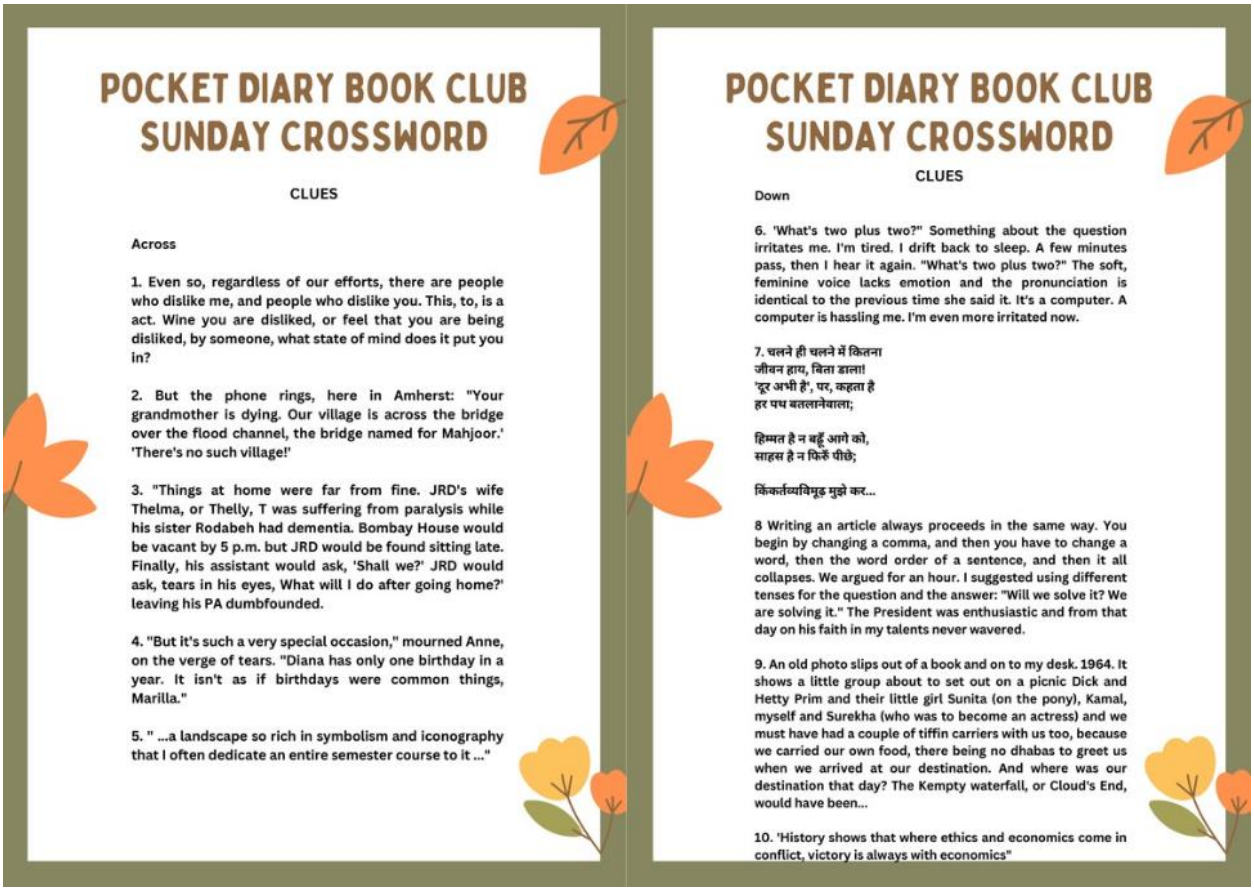
Gourav's reading of **Raat Pashmine Ki** by Gulzar left the room in a contemplative silence. His narration of Gulzar's delicate portrayal of love—sparked by a simple accident involving falling books—felt like something straight out of a rom-com. The beauty of Gulzar's work was deeply appreciated by all.

The session concluded with **Gautam** reading from Albert Camus's **The Myth of Sisyphus**, which plunged us into an existential debate. Questions about the justification of suicide, the never-ending pursuit of life's purpose, and even a tangent comparing Thanos the god of war with the Marvel character were all discussed. We ended the meeting on a philosophical note, agreeing that, ultimately, "we don't know anything."

Books Read:

- Gautam - The Myth of Sisyphus by Albert Camus
- Rohan - Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris
- Tanvi - Pet Sematary by Stephen King
- Akanksha - What you are looking for is in the Library by Michiko Aoyama
- Kiranjot - Banarasi Saree by Kaka Hathrasi
- Rijuta - Forty Rules of Love by Elif Shafak
- Anushri - Brotherless Night by V. V. Ganeshananthan
- Gourav - Raat Pashmine Ki by Gulzar
- Abha - Mark Antony's speech from Julius Caesar.
- Meghna - Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom

Turn the page, for clues!



POCKET DIARY BOOK CLUB SUNDAY CROSSWORD

CLUES

Across

1. Even so, regardless of our efforts, there are people who dislike me, and people who dislike you. This, to, is a act. Wine you are disliked, or feel that you are being disliked, by someone, what state of mind does it put you in?

2. But the phone rings, here in Amherst: "Your grandmother is dying. Our village is across the bridge over the flood channel, the bridge named for Mahjoor.' 'There's no such village!'

3. "Things at home were far from fine. JRD's wife Thelma, or Thelly, T was suffering from paralysis while his sister Rodabeh had dementia. Bombay House would be vacant by 5 p.m. but JRD would be found sitting late. Finally, his assistant would ask, 'Shall we?' JRD would ask, tears in his eyes, What will I do after going home?' leaving his PA dumbfounded.

4. "But it's such a very special occasion," mourned Anne, on the verge of tears. "Diana has only one birthday in a year. It isn't as if birthdays were common things, Marilla."

5. " ...a landscape so rich in symbolism and iconography that I often dedicate an entire semester course to it ..."

POCKET DIARY BOOK CLUB SUNDAY CROSSWORD

CLUES

Down

6. 'What's two plus two?" Something about the question irritates me. I'm tired. I drift back to sleep. A few minutes pass, then I hear it again. "What's two plus two?" The soft, feminine voice lacks emotion and the pronunciation is identical to the previous time she said it. It's a computer. A computer is hassling me. I'm even more irritated now.

7. चलने ही चलने में कितना
जीवन हाय, बिता डाला!
'दूर अभी है', पर, कहता है
हर पथ बतलानेवाला;

हिम्मत है न बढ़ूँ आगे को,
साहस है न फिरूँ पीछे;

किंकर्तव्यविमूढ़ मुझे कर...

8 Writing an article always proceeds in the same way. You begin by changing a comma, and then you have to change a word, then the word order of a sentence, and then it all collapses. We argued for an hour. I suggested using different tenses for the question and the answer: "Will we solve it? We are solving it." The President was enthusiastic and from that day on his faith in my talents never wavered.

9. An old photo slips out of a book and on to my desk. 1964. It shows a little group about to set out on a picnic Dick and Hetty Prim and their little girl Sunita (on the pony), Kamal, myself and Surekha (who was to become an actress) and we must have had a couple of tiffin carriers with us too, because we carried our own food, there being no dhabas to greet us when we arrived at our destination. And where was our destination that day? The Kempty waterfall, or Cloud's End, would have been...

10. 'History shows that where ethics and economics come in conflict, victory is always with economics"

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