



# RHYVERS BEAT

VOLUME 02 | EDITION 05 | MAY 2023 | ₹ 100



# Nostalgia



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# RHYVERS BEAT



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## FROM THE DESK OF GROUP EDITOR

There comes a time in your life when you have to choose to turn the page, write another book or simply close it.

Nostalgia. 'Remembrance of things past is not necessarily the remembrance of things as they were.' We colour them, we shade them, we even shape them the way we want to.

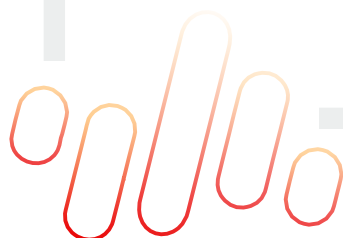
'It is strange how we hold on to the pieces of the past while we wait for our futures.' It is the magic that pulls at us, the fragrance that wafts over us, the shadows and silhouettes that await our touch.

In the May edition of Beat, our authors and poets catch hold of vapours and clouds of nostalgia and turn them into words. Their words float on beautiful pages, awaiting the readers who shall taste and relish them.

English poet Robert Browning spoke of nostalgia. "How sad and bad and mad it was - but then, how it was sweet!"

Was it all sweet? Perhaps. Perhaps not. Our creative writers explore the many hues of nostalgia. On these beautiful unpredictable days of May when sometimes the rain showers down unexpectedly and other times the sun shines gloriously, enjoy this lilting edition that celebrates nostalgia. Happy reading.

*Affan Yesvi*  
Affan Yesvi





**DR. SONIKA SETHI**

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR'S DESK

*What is nostalgia, after all, but an attempt to preserve that which was good in the past.* (Ruskin Bond)

Nostalgia is a bitter-sweet candy, a sepia-tinted photograph with toothless grins, a lost-and-found place with hinged apertures, a seductive-gilded memory, a melody playing on an old gramophone striking a brooding chord, a faintly aromatic dish relegated to the past, a wilted bloom pressed between the yellowed pages of a book, the lingering fragrance of *ittar* on an old kerchief, a well worn-out school uniform, a grandmother's house with giggles and cries of mischievous elves, a wooden bench in a park with carved initials and hearts pierced with Cupid's arrows...Nostalgia is all this and much more.

Human beings are dubiously, blessed and cursed with the burden of memories. At times, they lead us to the most pleasant places, sounds and people and bring involuntary smiles while on other occasions they mysteriously haunt us and make us pensive. Vladimir Nabokov defined these memories of times gone by as,

*Nostalgia in reverse, the longing for yet another strange land, grew especially strong in Spring.*

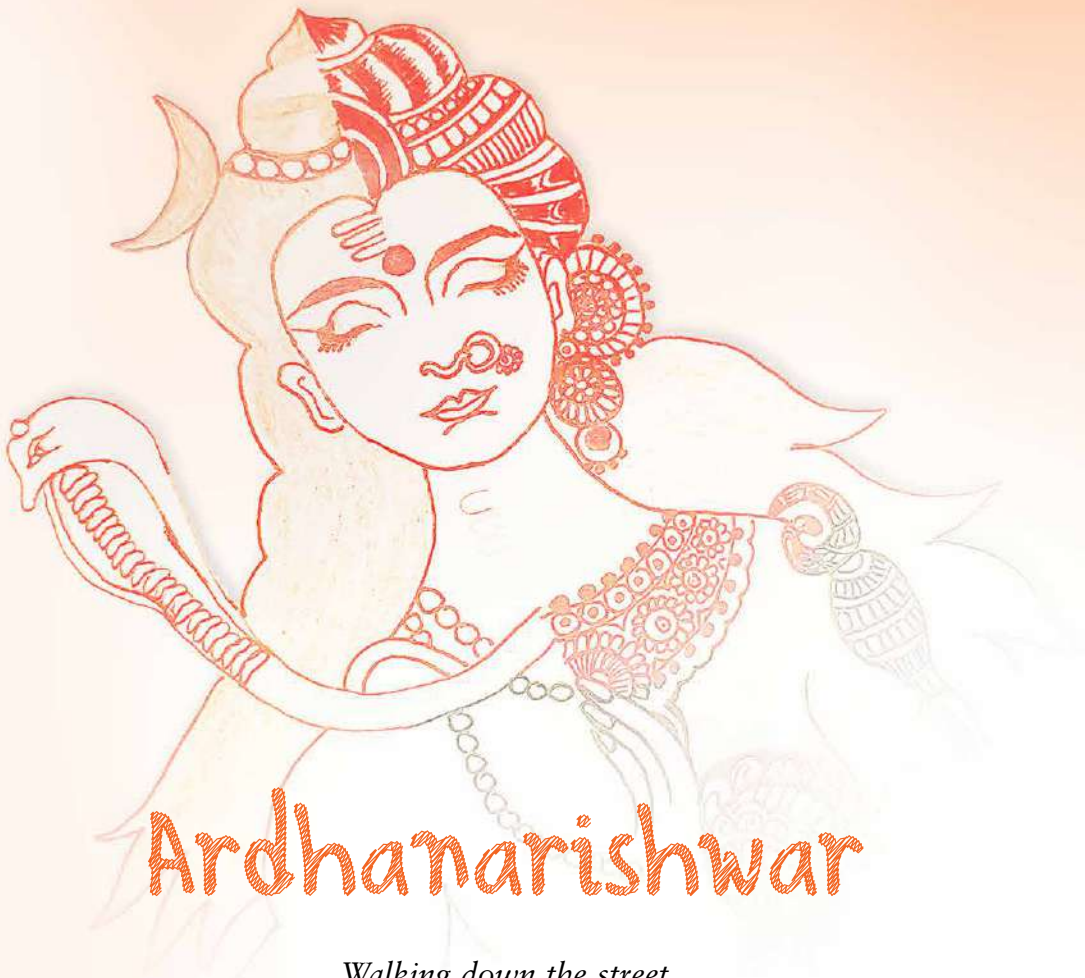
The longing, the yearning and the desire to reach out to one's childhood, one's youth, to relive the good old times or to mend the broken past is what comprises Nostalgia.

This month, our contributors took up the cudgels and opened their memory boxes to bring out the dusty and cob-webbed cloaks of long forgotten memories and spun some priceless verses and stories out of them. Indulge in their nostalgia and who knows you might find a lost trinket. We wish you,

*Happy Reading! Happy Writing! Happy Remembering!*

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## Ardhanarishwar

*Walking down the street  
I chanced upon the beauty of a tree  
Different, yet special with its own identity  
depicting the beauty of TWO in ONE BODY.*

*It stopped me in my tracks!  
Nostalgia of years gone by floated past my mind's eye.  
The duality of the tree screamed in silence  
To unfold untold stories of enduring all weathers.*

*I stare at the tree, travelling back on time,  
Wondering when the years of my life pass by?  
Two entities existed separately yet content within each other,  
But today, who am I?*

*Two entities still exist separately yet within each other,  
Just like Ardhanarishwar...  
A form of Shiva and Parvati appearing together in one body  
Two genders united in togetherness.  
Not to outshine but to complement each other.*

*Shiva as Being and Shakti as Becoming-  
The duality of nature is fascinating!*



**ALAKANANDA PRAMANIK**

is a Bestselling Author, Voiceover Artist and Storyteller. Based in Kolkata she is currently working on a Web series called 'SHOWSTOPPERZZ' in collaboration with Cinema For A Cause.



# *When You're Not Before Me*

*My eyes keep roving without you,  
soulless living room, a kitchen with no spices,  
our bedroom the wrong kind of naked.*

*Your face was pointillized on my irises  
the first time I saw you.  
Ever since they got the first glimpse of your eyes  
that ricochet of fiery arrows to my heart.*

*My eyes see your glow everywhere the light shines,  
My eyes see your silhouette everywhere the light falls.  
The sun and I conspire. Your shadows, tricks  
and illusions slip my eyes whenever you walk away,  
inventing worry, collapsing age, torturing me  
with counterfeit smiles.*

*Without you my eyes become lighthouse beacons,  
filters, binary gatekeepers, perpetually seeing  
or saying yes or no, you or no one.*



**KANWAR DINESH SINGH**

is Associate Professor of English in Shimla, H.P. He is a Poet, Storyteller, Critic, Translator and the Editor of Hyphen.





# Through the Child's Eye

Much of my childhood was spent in far-flung places, the names of which neither people nor I had ever heard. This was perhaps, for the best, as there were no expectations attached to the place nor to me growing up there.

I remember growing up in BIT, Mesra, 14 miles from the nearest city, Ranchi. I was around 4-5 years old. I was just beginning to notice the world around me and it seemed magical. Like everything looks after a shower of rain, newly painted, fresh, in sharp focus which then slowly sinks back to normal, secure hues of dust and pallor.

The place was ensconced by a Sal forest, a river snaked through it and in the distance could be made out shadowy blue hillocks, interesting and foreboding at the same time.

Oh, the things one could find rustling through the dry-leaved woods when Ma was taking her afternoon siesta! I picked

up my first love from the hollow of a tree. He (not sure of the gender but would like to think about it as a 'he') was glossy, mossy green with large, bulbous appealing eyes and three-toed webbed

hands and legs. They say tree frogs emit toxins from their skin. I was not privy to that information and if there were toxins then obviously I was oblivious to it then. Brought him back home surreptitiously, housed in my dungaree pocket. Which was emptied later by my mother and then she let out an aria which literally shook the tenements around our bungalow. After a resounding bout of verbal and physical chastisement, I was forced to return my newly acquired love back to his pavilion.

Looking back, this episode always brings a smile to my face. I am blessed to have had an unruly childhood before the regimentation of youth and adulthood happened.



**RUMA  
CHAKRABORTY**

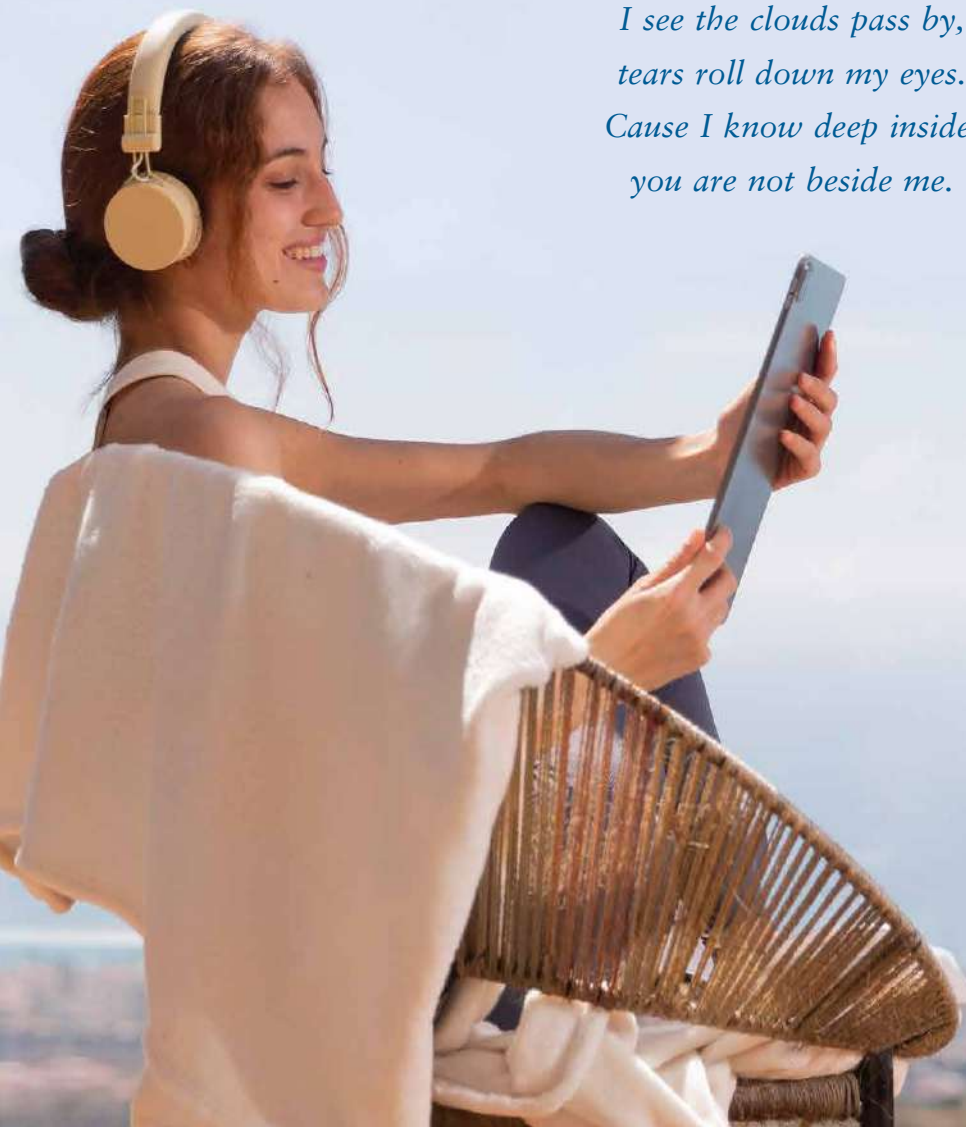
is a senior English faculty in a premium institution in Kolkata. A painter, a budding poet and compulsive story-teller, currently she is in the process of writing a compendium of short stories and poems.





# Come Hold Me

*I am sitting on the balcony,  
It's one in the morning  
There is a cool breeze,  
I feel it in my hair,  
but I am not at ease.  
Your voice rings in my ears,  
I feel you sitting across,  
holding a chilled beer.  
Time and again,  
you wink at me,  
scrolling through your phone,  
laughing and sharing what you see.  
I see the clouds pass by,  
tears roll down my eyes.  
Cause I know deep inside,  
you are not beside me.*



**NIKITA SANGAI**

is a trained dancer,  
entrepreneur and a  
dance therapist from  
Kolkata.

# These Times Come to All

My aversion to nostalgia is selective. It's not run-off-the-mill, double-standard hypocrisy where a ramble down your memory lane turns out magically inferior to mine. It's the way of my day-to-day living. I don a new day, each day, then spend the next twenty-four hours milking the most out of that cash cow.

You might be into genteel living; mine's excessive where trust me, the moments can't stand to be seized anymore. So the memories collected make my nostalgia a Pandora's Box with stark labels like 'FRAGILE' and 'HANDLE WITH CARE'.

While there are no corpses of ex-wives in my barred tower, would you want to revisit a report card with insightful remarks?

'Careless; can improve in Math with diligent practice.'

I wonder if Wordsworth would have cared to defer writing Daffodils,

'Let me first differentiate and integrate the expanse of the daffodil field with the distance I want to walk.'

With the two 'eyes' in hindsight, I think of the farmer who changes the environment and not the plant when it does not grow. Not that I expect our education system to accept it even now.

The stealing and lying are painful passages. There is a darkness that posts 'DO NOT ENTER' signs I respect.

I have accepted that my moral fibre is torn. Whether it was weakness, timidity, or fear of the consequences of my mistakes. I will not waste another breath justifying it.

When driving a car, the most probable outcome is an *accident* if your attention is on the rearview mirror *instead of the road ahead*. I am not saying the past has redeemed me. I have apologised does not mean the pain I caused others is forgotten. I believe beyond a wholesome discipline in being gentle with myself and keeping peace in my soul.

The problem of being excessively sentimental about the past is denying change. It believes the best is lost. Nothing in the future will ever top it. If the highest point in your life is past, the future becomes pointless.

Nostalgia will blind you to what virtue exists in the world around you. You might grow cynical and your life arid, disenchanted. Entropy is the law of the physical world. The disorder will increase as one goes forward in time. But we have the ability to think for ourselves, to dream, and to make choices.

Our best life teachings come from stories.

Recall the Ramayana, when Prince Angad reached the extreme Southern tip of India. Man with a mission, Angad searched for the whereabouts of Sita, who had been abducted by Ravana. When Angad saw the expanse of the Indian Ocean between India and Lanka, he was discouraged.

Hanuman, at this point, was reminded by Lord Jambavan of his past exploits to gain the confidence to jump across the Indian Ocean. Hanuman's powers were innate, but he had been cursed to forget them.

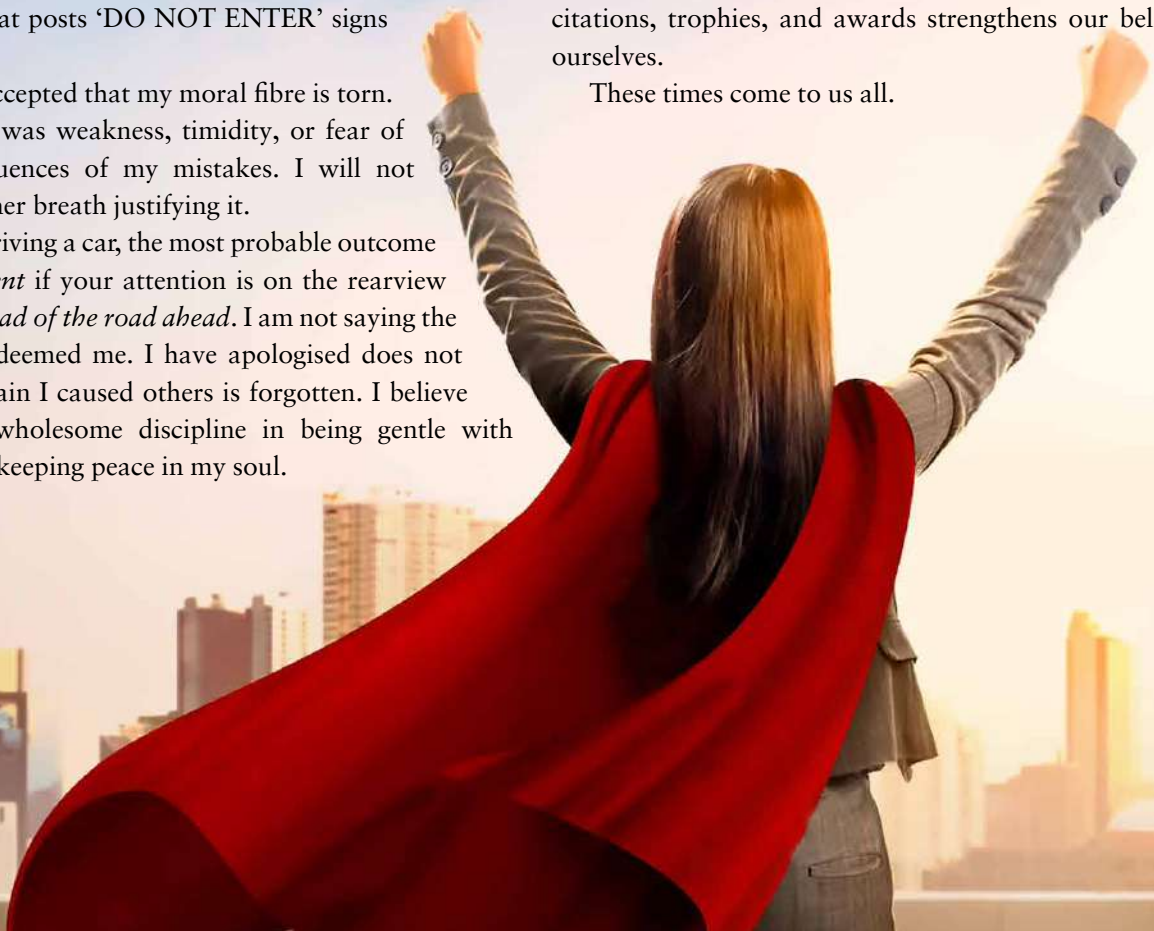
Sometimes, abilities exist, but we lose the confidence to use them. That is when browsing through the meandering lanes and by-lanes of nostalgia in picture albums, letters, citations, trophies, and awards strengthens our belief in ourselves.

These times come to us all.



**RUBY MOHAN**

is the author of 14 books and straddles two continents with homes in Texas, USA, and Chandigarh





# *Yellow Pages, Sepia Images*

*Nostalgia sublime and mellowed  
Seeping through yellowed pages*

*To narrowed eyes profound  
Lots of drowned emotions  
some unbound some inside*

*continue to hide, refusing  
to stride out today*

*Locked up away, safely*

*A grey memory yonder*

*Makes me ponder, again*

*A corner insipid, dark*

*Heart says hark, listen*

*A stark reality faded*

*But a disentangled thought*

*A jaded evocation unfurled*

*From a whorled dream*

*A evanesced sepia nostalgia*



**ARUN HARIHARAN**

is an Indian Army veteran and is an avid biker, author, poet, compulsive traveller, photographer and history buff. His collection of Short Stories is titled "A Baker's Dozen- 13 Chilling Indian Tales of Macabre" He is presently based out of Gurgaon, Delhi NCR.

# *Through My Soul-Mind*

*Sipping the morning cup of tea  
Her eyes watch the rain  
Mind floating into a reverie  
Holding her memories' golden hand  
In the deep misty lane  
Stumble upon a nostalgic Treasure,  
A Trunk of past moments  
And open a few bygone ones  
Pitter-patter raindrops fall upon the window  
The little girl in plaits sips her chocolaty milk  
Her eyes watch each drop fall  
Her ears listen to the music  
Playful hands shoved outside to hold sparkling droplets  
Another leap... through the romantic teenaged eyes  
Serenaded by the blushing pink rose, wet with dew  
Holding an umbrella, walking through the trees  
An imaginary conversation with the prince of her dreams  
One more leap in time to behold  
Sunny garden of her childhood  
Blooming, beautiful, flowering spring with chirping birds  
Butterflies with their colourful wings rest on her hands  
In carefree splendor, the chitter-chatter  
So much laughter with a song  
And yet another leap through memory  
The young maiden amidst the shiny green fields  
Looks up to the majestic ubiquitous sky with hues  
reflected in blue  
Snowy clouds floating past the place of her dreams.  
Memory, her all-time favourite friend,  
Each time a kaleidoscopic journey of time within time  
Together they travel through the Soul-mind.*



**ABHA JOSHI  
SHARMA**

is a Senior Architect with the Government of Punjab. She lives in Chandigarh and dabbles in poetry and prose.



# Word, She Wrote

Writing can be taught  
and is being done so  
very effectively



*Priya Hajela, author of the novel **The Ladies' Tailor** published by HarperCollins India, is basking in the glory of success of her maiden novel. However, the path to success is never easy. Read Priya Hajela's take on her journey as a writer in a candid interview with our Executive Editor, **Sonika Sethi**.*

**SS: What propelled you to quit marketing and venture into the field of fiction writing?**

**PH:** You trudge down a path. You become quite good at what you do. But it's hard work. You play nice, you reach out, you lean in and all those other things that the corporate world requires you to do. You keep going because you have children to school and you have new cars to buy, vacations to pay for and college tuitions

coming up. And then, as if magically, you have choices. The tuitions are paid and the cars don't care whether they are old and neither do you. You start down something else because there are stories inside you that must be told - or so you believe. And you begin telling them and that's where it starts. At first, you hesitate, then you dig deeper, then you let the truths surface and just like that, you can write - lessons learnt from

the Lit class in 11th and 12th come welling up and you feel like working hard again but this time the hard work doesn't put you out, it makes you whole.

**SS: How difficult was it to write your maiden novel *Ladies' Tailor* and what kept you motivated throughout your writing?**

**PH:** I would not say it was difficult as much as it was like walking into a tunnel, alone, no provisions, pitch dark, gravel on the ground that twisted my feet first one way, then the other, no light at the end, not even a train chugging in the distance to cut through the loneliness. I wrote in this mental state even though physically I wasn't alone. Yet, I say it was not difficult because I don't think there is any other way.



The lead up to all this writing involved a lot of research which is something I can do endlessly. It brings me tremendous joy to learn little details about random things that usually find their way into my stories. But there was also the big stuff – like the refugee camps, how clothing is made, the different stitches, fabrics, types of embroidery, the neighborhoods and bazaars of Lahore, the roads that traverse in and out of the city, the cars that people drove and so much more.

**SS: How was your experience with HarperCollins and their editorial assistance?**

**PH:** By the time I had written the 8th version of the book, my agent, Mita Kapur had no inputs – not a single editorial comment and my editor took ten days to give me editorial feedback. It wasn't a drawn out, back and forth activity, very painless in fact.

**SS: What was the genesis of your novel? What and who influenced you to take up the oft-repeated theme of Partition and turn into a racy thriller?**

**PH:** Interestingly, when I decided to write a story set in the time of Partition, about 6 years ago, Partition as a theme was just coming out of hibernation. It was the 70th anniversary of Partition. The 1947 Partition Archives related activity, started in 2011, was gaining momentum. In preparation, I had read fictional works such as - Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Ice Candy Man*, *A Train to Pakistan* by Khushwant Singh and *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie, as well as Non Fiction works such as Urvashi Butalia's *The Other Side of Silence*, Ravinder Kaur's research study – *Since 1947 - Partition Narratives Among Punjabi Migrants of Delhi* and Nisid Hajari's very recent *Midnight's Furies*.

My reason for choosing Partition as the backdrop for my story was simply to understand what my grandparents had experienced when they had made the move from their home in





Gujarkhan. However, the story and the racy thriller that it turned into was my own fondness for that genre. I like reading stories with twists and turns and surprises and resolutions that get reversed, that make the reader think and reflect and wonder. So, that's what I tried to write.

**SS: Gurdev, throughout the novel, appears to be a 'Man on a Mission' whether deporting his family from Sukho to Amritsar or smuggling the teenaged artisans from Lahore to India. What all research went into the making of Gurdev Singh since he symbolizes the titular character Ladies' Tailor?**

**PH:** In creating Gurdev, I first combined a number of real people and came up with this infallible Superman. However, a flawless character is never interesting so I made him male chauvinist, set in his ways and opinionated. I need to give him room for improvement, for transformation which I did through several people who crossed his life – his wife Simrat knocked him down a peg or two in the only way she knew. His partners taught him

the ladies tailoring business and Noor taught him to love.

**SS: Any tips for the aspiring writers out there?**

**PH:** I have written an article for The Daily Guardian, Delhi, titled 'Can Writing be Taught?' In it I cite one of the best teachers of writing that I have come across, John Gardner. Amongst many other things, Gardner states that there are three things that a writer must avoid. These are **Sentimentality** – when the writer uses melodrama to tell the story as opposed to letting the story unfold as it must. **Frigidity** – when the writer is not as connected to his characters as he should be. **Mannerism** – when the writer's ego inserts itself into the writing but is not style. These three flaws, Gardner says, are hard to unteach.

I conclude the article with this - So, yes, writing can be taught and is being done so very effectively. However, there are flaws a writer can correct easily and flaws that a writer can't. Identifying these and understanding them is more important than any other action a writer can take because that is what ultimately separates the good writers from the great ones.

In very simple terms, many writing programs talk about being 'authentic.' That's not easy to teach or to learn. To be authentic, you have to be vulnerable, leave ego somewhere far away, look within with so much candour that you cringe and step into shoes that make your feet bleed.

**SS: What are your upcoming projects? Any new novel in the pipeline?**

**PH:** I have two in the works. One is the story of a manic depressive woman as told by the many people in her life. The second is a historical novel that goes back to the second Anglo-Sikh War and ends with Gurdev. It is a prequel to Ladies' Tailor and further explores the idea that adventurism runs in families.



# Still there

*The albums in my closet beckon  
Entranced, I don't blink for a second  
The youthful smiles entice  
The coiffure definitely a surprise!  
It's me! Just doesn't look like me...  
And I chase the childhood carefree,  
The youth of jewelled dreams  
The dreams of enchantment...  
The crazy games with brothers  
The gulli danda and the marbles  
The kabaddi on the muddy roads  
The cricket fever in full dose  
With zilch care for the clothes.  
Pure laughter everywhere  
Mingling with the freshest air  
Every single moment, still there!  
No pseudo smiles....No dirty vibes  
Just love in abundance  
A life full of substance.*



**PARMINDER SONI**  
lives in Chandigarh  
and has 3 books to  
her credit.



# The Ancestral House

"Mom, I am here. But I can't find the house!"

I had come to see my grandparents' house which was sold off after their death around twenty five years ago. It was a chance that my husband got posted to a nearby city and I drove down to the small town that occupied a lot of space in my childhood memories.

The house was typical of the era. An outer courtyard that entertained the clients visiting my grandfather, a leading advocate of his times. Our domain was an inner courtyard with rooms on all sides. A sprawling roof that could accommodate tens of *manjis* for us to sleep under the stars. Revising the constellations, listening to ghost stories, pulling up the sheets on top of us when it drizzled, it was one of our favourite places. All these memories flowed like a monsoon rivulet when I arrived there.

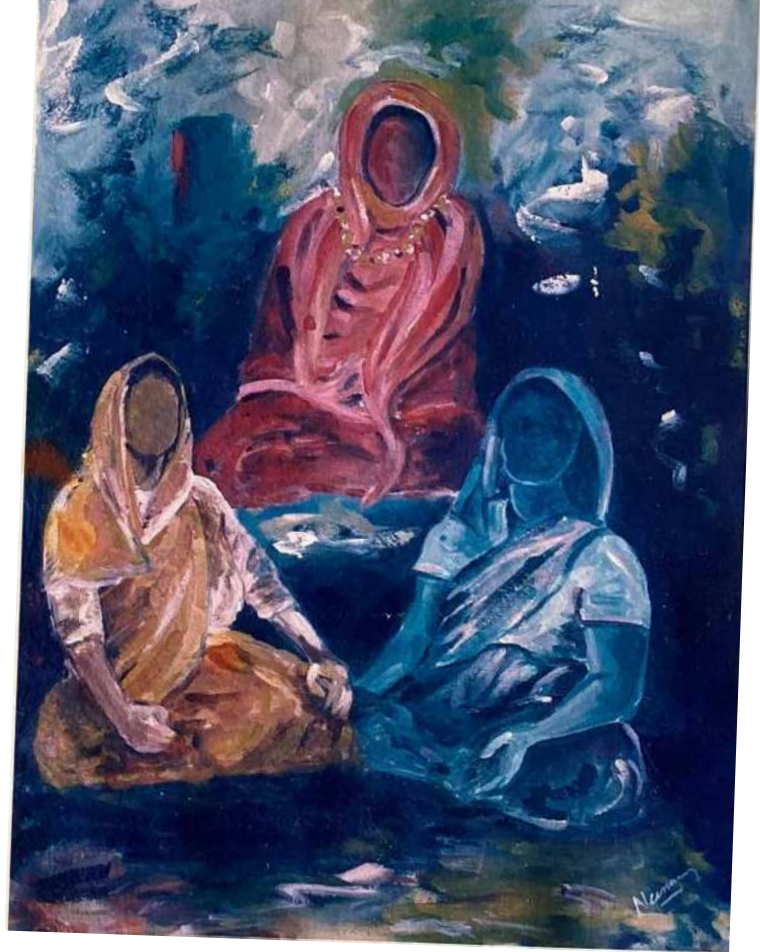
Despite the change of scenery, I could identify the landmarks. Cross the district court, then grain market, enter through a narrow-laned market and take a right towards the street that has a dead-end. There, the second last from the end, used to be our grandparents' house.

But it was not there. Someone who had bought it had demolished and made a double storey house. That's when I called my Mom, "What shall I do?"

"Since you have come so far, just check if grandma's friend *Moti bhabhi* is alive. Do you remember her house?" she asked.

Moti bhabhi was a fat lady. Her house was just two houses away from ours. One could always find her sitting on the steps of her house in a carelessly draped saree, talking to passers-by, giving instructions to her daughter-in-law, haggling with vegetable vendors while fanning herself with a *pakhhi*. I looked towards her house and there sat a lady, on the steps, looking curiously in our direction. I asked her hesitatingly, "Are you *Moti Bhabhi*?"

"No, I am her daughter-in-law. She is very old and unwell so she keeps inside."



We went inside, "Ma, someone has come to see you." I recognized her instantly. She hadn't lost much weight, but age had caught up with her.

It took her some time to re-align herself. She looked at me and asked, "*Kaun*?"

I sat down on her *takhtposh*, and told her my grandfather's and father's names. She hugged me tightly and asked for the welfare of each and every person of the family. Some even I had also not met for years but kept answering whatever I was asked. She started crying. My children touched my shoulder and I realized I was crying, too.

She sent one of her grandchildren to get a picture from the small shrine in the house. In the picture, she was sitting with my *dadi* on the floor at the feet of a saintly lady. "I remember your *dadi* every day when I see this picture of our guru during my pooja. I don't know how long I will survive. You take it. I think I was alive for this day only because I had to give this picture to someone who would value it".

"Your visit has rekindled the memories of my friendship with your *dadi*. Those were such beautiful days. Now you don't find those kinds of people," she lamented. Pushing a few crumpled notes in my hand, "Your children have come to their great grandparents' house."



**NEENU VIJ**  
is an artist, curator  
and writer living in  
Panchkula (Haryana)

# Missing the Grand Love

*You showed me the path when the world turned hostile  
You held my hand tight with a wrinkled smile  
You walked along with an umbrella of love  
Recalling each day of mine, though going senile.  
I see the tree I used to climb  
Can hear your thump saying "Come, now it is time."  
I see the house you built so fine  
See the mirror that still has the same shine  
I see you through me living again  
Grinning heartily even in agony and pain  
I see you around holding my hand,  
Miss the love that was pure and grand.  
I know you are here...my tears say so  
It's a stage and we all are part of the show  
But you played well, the role that was assigned  
Love the touch that was warm and kind.*



**NITIN MEHTA**  
is Associate Professor  
at Veterinary  
University, Ludhiana  
(Punjab)



# *Till the Curtains Fall...*

*Memories evoked  
Carried me on the wings  
Of the mythical bird  
Across the clouds of time  
To the world of the familiar,  
Less terrifying.*

*The same old walls turned  
Antique and enchanting  
The filtered events and actions  
Laced with the distance of age  
Cause duress.  
The hurt, the shame  
Scrap themselves off  
Like the soot on the chimney  
Uncared for long.  
The air felt innocent and alive.  
The soul soaked itself  
In the song, sweet and undying.  
Longing- its infant  
Took a curve and flew over  
To feed on the honeyed presence  
Of the recovered dreams.*

*Nostalgia-  
An overwhelming pal  
Withheld what I desired not  
And cheated me lovingly  
Till the lights went on  
And the curtains fell.*



**MANJIT KAUR**  
is a retired Professor  
of English from  
Chandigarh.

# The 'Sense'ational Trip



**DR ADITYA RATTAN** is a practising cardiologist and writes opinion articles and middle features in newspapers and magazines. He has also authored the book, "Install Antivirus in Your HEARTware."

As I dig deeper into my level of consciousness and write this, I get nostalgic about the digital-detox trip to Goa, a few years back...

My eyelids droop, blurring the aperture of my vision as I am transported in the flow of time and feel everything happening in the present, this very moment. I am on this tour to have an e-break. I am not carrying anything with me— no suitcases, no wallet, not even any toiletries— just my flight-mode enabled mobile phone and some cash in the waist pouch. I hire a bicycle from the airport for the next five days and chart out the map. I am here to immerse myself in nature and to live the life of a vagabond.

Warm, moist winds welcome me, and I feel my sensations heightened. My bucket hat is giving me a light compression on the scalp while my sunglasses rest gently on the bridge of my nose. I gulp a sip of water. A few drops escape from the corner of my mouth and trickle down slowly to meet the sweat beads in the creases of my neck. Together, they gain the acceleration needed to roll further down my T-shirt, as two lovers elope to get a cover.

A lonely stretch of countryside, I see two dogs at a distance, occupying the lion's share of the tarred road. One of them gets excited at the sound of the pedals making musical notes with the rolling chain. He gets up and decides to chase me with a terrifying bark. I get down and start walking. He starts following me, now with a lower-pitched growl. I smell a mix of fear in the air— his and mine. I am not sure of his share, though. His partner is half interested and grumbles, as if showing solidarity. I can hear my heart racing as I cross them, making a perfect balance of not looking them straight into the eye while keeping a watch through the corner of my eyes.

A little while later I enter a forest track and hear the sound of cycle tyres crunching the fallen leaves. I take a halt and close my eyes to enjoy this moment of blissful silence. It is so meditative. I take a deep breath. A strong flow of air carrying the aroma of wet, decaying leaves on the track rushes to arouse the sensory cells in my nostrils. I feel my sensory system waking up from a deep slumber and distilling each sensation before offering it to the grey area of my brain.

Somewhere deep, these experiences are stored. At leisure, I peep into these memories, they come alive and make me yearn to relive these nostalgic moments again and again.



# Nostalgia of the Insignificant

“Just-like-that” means something insignificant. But this ‘something’ is the flavour of life. This ‘something’ does not let you down, does not cheat you and does not weigh upon you. This something is the content of our daily life.

A summer afternoon some fifty-six years ago when I was waiting for a bus in a small town near Sirhind in Punjab. The quiet of the summer afternoon was speaking too well, but for the Rafi song playing on the transistor of a fruit vendor. In between, a crow on the tree behind me informed about its presence by its caw-caw. A mother managed to arrange water for her lap-borne child from a hand-pump nearby. The sudden draft of air calmed my sweating cheeks. The bus arrived and I embarked upon my journey.

Around 1965, during our school days, it was the recess period. Inside the classroom, the teacher would not allow food. Outside, it was too hot in summers. So, we would find the shade of trees and try to huddle together up to the line between the sun and the shade. This line would change its position and keep the border boys changing their

places. Big sized eagles usually flew over the huge lawns of the school during lunch hour. To attract these carnivores, we would not mind sparing half a chapatti from our tiffin. Innovation would take over us and we would tie a thread to the chapatti,

then drag it from a distance, so that we could enjoy the sight of the eagles that swooped down for the chapattis (as if we were the flight managers). When they took the chapatti and flew away the tension on the thread was the ultimate joy.

Year 1973. Place Patiala in Punjab. It was like any other evening at the Fountain Chowk down the Mall Road. I was a medical student. The evening had me standing outside a tea-stall and sipping tea and looking purposelessly at the road. Vehicles, not so many in those days, kept moving this way and that. The fountain splashed water in its own pre-determined stream. Next to it, the Phul theatre had its own quota of visitors. All this meant nothing because this is anyway the routine stuff of a town. But even now it means a lot to me because I was part of it— not by design but by nature’s intent.

These are all just-like-that, random memories, nostalgic nevertheless. They convince me that the real nostalgia is of the insignificant. There lies no purpose in that; no plan, no retrospective grievance, nobody to blame for anything and nothing to repent or gloat about. It is as if this alone makes my existence complete. If only we could always find some moments... to relive such moments...



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# *Catch Them Young...*

***Rhyvers Publishing Group organized a three day 'Creative Writing Workshop' for school students in association with T. S. State Central Library, Chandigarh.***

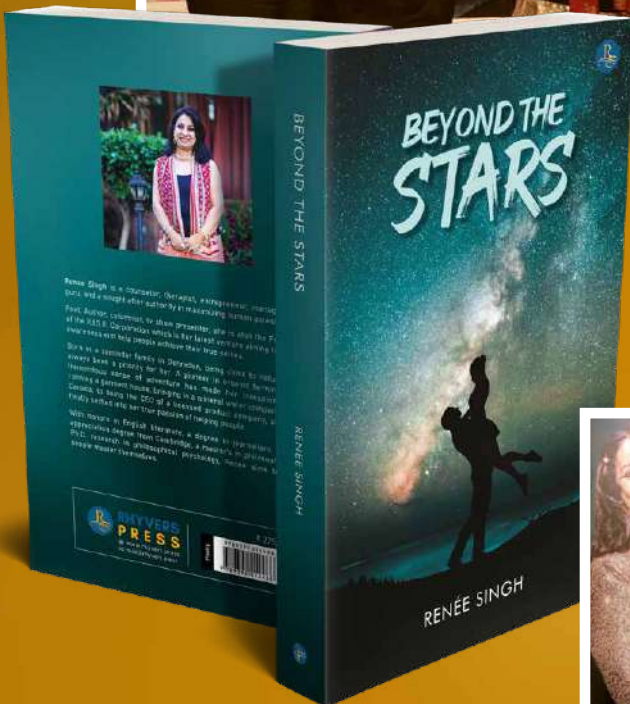
***The team included- Affan Yesvi (Director Rhyvers Group), Dr. Neeza Singh (Librarian), Dr. Sonika Sethi, Dr. Deviyani Singh, Navneet Grewal and Dr. Pratibha Jindal Gupta (Resource Persons)***











Columnist and Author Ms Reene Singh unveiled her book, 'Beyond the Stars' at Hayat Residency, Chandigarh. The book was launched by Ms Caroline Rowett, British Deputy High Commissioner at Chandigarh along with Mr Affan Yesvi, Director, Rhyvers Publishing Group, noted poet and author Ms Nirupama Dutt, Mr Ramesh Vinayak, Executive Editor Hindustan Times and Author and Editor Mr Roopinder Singh.







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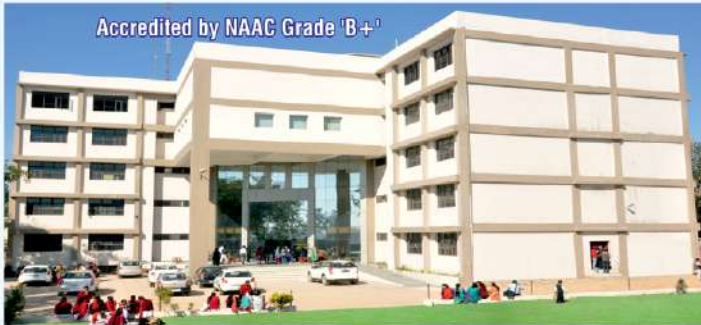
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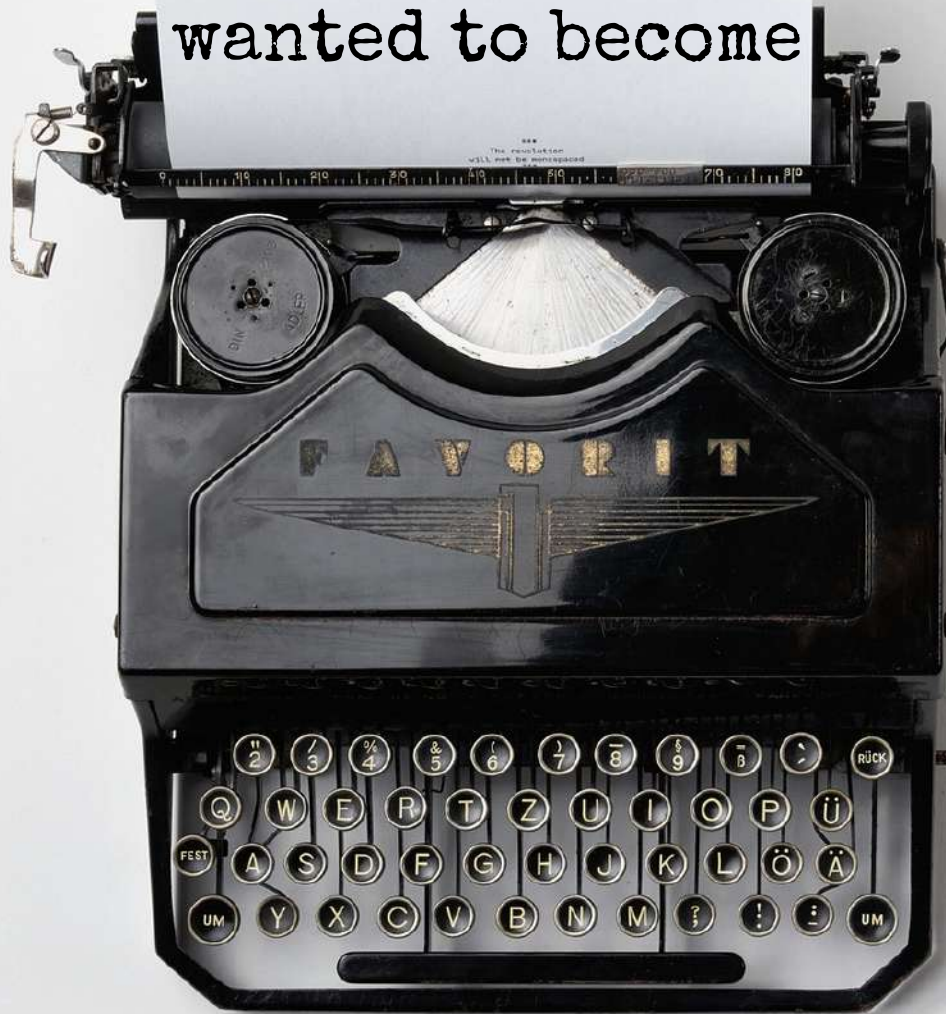
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