

THE ENGLISH LITERARY SOCIETY

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SHRI RAM COLLEGE OF COMMERCE

A WRITING TO THE WRITER

By C. Lalmalsawma

Journaling opens a whole new world where one can unveil, vouchsafe and blow the lid off his secrets, rage, shyness, sentiment and triumph. A world where one gets to know more about himself. There is a saying that no one does not really know themselves and that they themselves are a mystery waiting just to be discovered. And what better way could there be to discover yourself than mapping yourself by sitting down and bleeding on a paper; a dialogue with yourself.

When one reflects upon and maps himself through journaling, he knows where he is, who he is and what he wants. He then has a better understanding of himself with a more crystalline perspective, helping him in progressing through the course of his life and to nourish himself into a better man.

The dysfunctional work that stresses you out, a contentious relationship, life in the spotlight. Journal, because the page is forgiving and patient. It keeps secrets and does not care if you are contradicting yourself. On the pages, you can keep those thoughts that you want to separate yourself from. But also, those which you would like to cherish.

Sometimes, the journal becomes the only ear that listens to what you have to say and the only ointment that soothes you. Then it holds a part of you and becomes a souvenir of the person you once were. Often, people drop the journaling habit or never begin out of fear that they do not have anything interesting to write. But the wonderful thing about journaling is that you are not writing for anyone and no one has to read. Not even you. Nonetheless, wouldn't it be wondrous just to hark back at the milestones of your past experiences? You may even produce something worthwhile capable of impacting lives in writing.

"Paper is more patient than people" - Anne Frank



POWER WITHIN YOU

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By- Shreya Raghuwanshi

Is Everything getting a bit too much? Confused about life choices and just mad at yourselves for not being able to multitask? Well, Journaling can be an outlet for all these problems.

As new adults, we all get overwhelmed by everyone's expectations and it weighs down our ability to stay calm and think rationally. This can have disastrous consequences for our mental and emotional well-being and can lead to self-deprecating thoughts. This is the age when we often find ourselves in a dilemma over various issues related to personal and professional life. In retrospect, we all have faced some situations which appear to be so difficult to navigate through but turned out to be only minor obstacles in hindsight, and that is the power of Introspection.

So, why did we start talking about Introspection all of a sudden? There cannot be a better way to look deep within yourself and introspect other than Journaling. Putting down all of your thoughts in a diary appears to be scary at first but this habit can be life-changing in multiple ways. Writing down all of your deepest feelings of fear, insecurities and happiness requires a lot of courage as it involves a lot of introspection, but in the long run this routine leads to a better mental health as the ability of calmly organizing your thoughts brings into focus a lot of details that might have been missed earlier which prevents us from making any rash judgements. As we grow up, our surroundings, including the people around us change which can make us irritated and nervous with ourselves. In order to avoid this, a smooth transition is necessary which can be done through the activity of Journaling. Just the ability of being able to revisit old memories puts our mind at ease which is very necessary for learning and self-growth. Journaling can therefore be a great tool for Introspecting our actions and improving ourselves.

If something requires courage but can give you strength, it is the best tool for your growth.

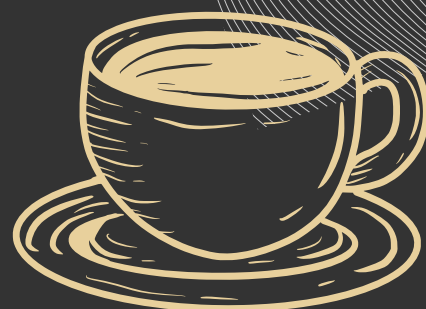


RAMBLING ON

BY- TINA SINGARIA

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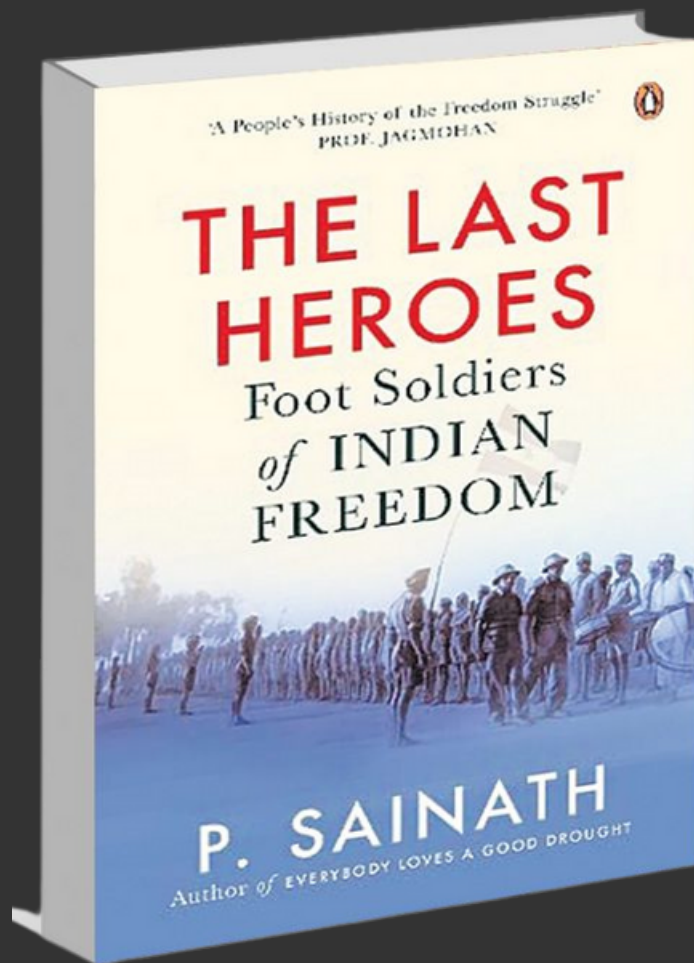
Lights are dim where I'm sat,
Walls blue
But they don't quite match my hue.
I've mustered the best of me
To write as I've been told.
Seems easy,
but each time I fold.
As the nib touches the paper,
I'm reminded of the atrocities
that came and went.
This wet paper and moist cheeks tell a tale I
can't decipher.
When did I become a fiend for the way
metal caressed my skin?
They say pen is the mightiest weapon of all,
I think I know now that I've experienced it's
wrath.
How did I get lost in these familiar streets?
When did I start to prefer reckless straight
lines over curved calligraphy?



WHAT IS FREEDOM?

ANNAVAJHULA J. C. BOSE,
ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT, SRCC

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In this wonderful book, Palagummi Sainath tells the post-1947 generations, the stories of numerous foot soldiers (ordinary people) of Indian freedom struggle—stories that spew out the resounding truth that freedom and independence are not the same and that we need to learn how to make those come together.

The poem below that he had penned down for a small girl fighting the British Raj, conveys the above dual-message thus:

FOR DEMATI SABAR 'SALIHAN'

*They won't tell your story, Salihan
And I can't see you making Page 3
That's for the painted whatnot,
the liposuctioned lot,
the rest's for the Captains of Industry
Prime Time's not for you, Salihan
It is, and this isn't funny,
for those who murder and maim
who burn and who blame
And speak saintly then, of Harmony
The Brits torched your village, Salihan
So many men carrying guns
They came by the train
bringing terror and pain
Till sanity itself was undone
They burnt all there was, Salihan
after looting the cash and the grain
Brutes of the Raj
led a violent charge
But you faced them with total disdain
You strode down the street towards him
you faced that man with the gun
In Saliha they still tell the story
of the battle you fought and you won
Your kin lay bleeting around you
your father, a bullet in his leg
Still, you stood tall,
Drove those Brits to the wall
For you went there to fight, not to beg
You struck that officer, Salihan
And thrashed him before he could move
When he finally did
he limped and he did
seeking refuge from 16-year-old you
Forty girls against the Raj, Salihan
And strong and beautiful, too
Now you're shrunk and you're grey,
your body withers away
But there's a spark in those eyes that's still you*

*Those who toadied the Raj, Salihan,
they rule your poor village today
And build temples of stone
but they'll never atone
for bartering our freedoms away
You die as you lived, Salihan
Hungry, with little to eat
In history's shades
your memory, it fades,
like Raipur Jail's roster sheets
Had I but your heart, Salihan
What success would I then not see?
Though that battle itself
was not for yourself
But that your people might also be free
Our children should know you, Salihan
But what is your claim to fame?
No ramp did you glide
No crown wear with pride
Nor lend Pepsi and Coke your name
Do speak to me, Salihan
For endless an hour as you please
This hack, when we part,
wants to write of your heart
Not romance India's Captains of Sleaze*

Apart from the above homage to Salihan which conveys her exemplary bravery, there are stories of Hausabai, Bhagat Singh Jhuggian, Shobharam Gehervar, Mallu Swarajyam, Captain Bhau (Ramchandra Sripati Lad), N. Sankariah, Baji Mohammad, Laxmi Indira Panda, 'Badmash Gaon', Ganpati Yadav, Bhabani Mahato, H.S. Doreswamy, Thelu and Lokkhi Mahato, and R. Nallakannu. It was millions of ordinary people like them from rural areas, not elites from cities, who had really made independence possible. Sainath's maternal grandfather was a city-based freedom fighter who had spent years in British jails. He and his wife were a source of exponential inspiration for Sainath to write this book.

All the erstwhile freedom fighters were/are unhappy about independent India.

Hausabai supported the giant farmers' march on Parliament in November 2018 and called on the government "not to sleep but to wake up and work for the poor". Bhagat Singh Jhuggian, before his death, wanted people to know he did not like the state of the nation for whose freedom he had fought. None of the people running the country, according to him, "hold any legacy of the freedom movement. The political forces they (the RSS) represent—they were never there in the struggle for Independence and freedom. Not a single one of them. They will destroy this country if not checked...But believe me, the sun will set on this Raj too." According to Shobharam Geherwar, "Nobody cares for us. No one asks about the freedom fighters. There is not a single book which tells schoolchildren how we fought for freedom and achieved it. What do people know about us?" All that Mallu Swarajyam had cared about was the people's struggle for equality and justice—for land, livelihoods, liberation—and not for the split of people into so many groups based on caste and other identities. For Laxmi Panda, it was the recognition that mattered. And her dignity. Unfortunately, the central government failed to bestow them on her by granting a pension to her under the Swatantra Sainik Samman Yojana. According to Captain Bhau, "We dreamed of bringing freedom to the common man. It was a beautiful dream. We did achieve independence...But I don't think the larger dream was ever fully realized...today the man who has money rules. This is the state of our freedom." Freedom, he complained, remains the monopoly of a few. Sankariah's selfless commitment to the working class and peasantry remains undiminished. He believes Communists will "find the correct answers to electoral politics". That they will build mass movements on a greater scale. Baji Mohammad had said: "My only regret is that his (Mahatma Gandhi's) vision of what we should be as a nation, that is still not realised." His descendants say: "...we promote the legacy of communal harmony my granduncle stood for. A harmony so much in danger today."

As the freedom warriors of Badmash Gaon say, "Those confronting the Raj were mostly poor, unlettered peasants. Smallholders struggling to make ends meet. And also labourers and schoolteachers and malis and tailors and carpenters...We were the slaves of the British. They destroyed our economy. Indians had no rights. Our agriculture was ruined. People were reduced to terrible poverty. Between July and September 1942, only five or seven of the 400 families here had enough to eat. The rest braved hunger and humiliation...The present rulers, too, are pretty shameless. They loot the poor as well. Mind you, I won't equate anything to the British Raj, though. But our present lot are also awful." Ganpati Yadav is unhappy with how today's farmers are sinking under the burden of debt. "We got swarajya (Independence), but things are not what we were expecting..." He feels the current national and state governments of 2018 are worse than the previous ones, which were also bad. "No telling what they'll do next...". People had lofty hopes of the present dispensation. "But everything has turned out to be the opposite." In the story about Bhabani Mahato, we come to know that the politics and passion of most of the freedom warriors was with the Left. Their moral codes and lifestyle were guided by Gandhi. They were often torn between these two paths. They believed in ahimsa but at times retaliated against the British in violence. According to H.S. Doreswamy, who had openly voiced his support for the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act stir across the country, "Democracy is not just about winning elections. It is more important to find proper solutions to the challenges facing society." In the story about Thelu and Lokkhi Mahato, we come to know the most terrifying attacks by the British police and the feudal thugs and we also come to know the social banditry of the freedom warriors challenging the economic and social political order of the day. From Nallakannu's fight for many forgotten freedoms, we come to know that freedom movement, social reform and anti-feudal struggles were combined issues. The leftist freedom warriors fought for better and equal wages

They fought for the abolition of untouchability. They played a serious role in the temple entry movements. And they fought against the beatings and torture of the workers. They are against the present-day rise in communal violence and hatred.

To conclude, we get to know from Sainath's book that freedom is not just personal freedom but, more importantly, freedom from want and fear and freedom from the conflicts of ascriptive divides and discrimination. I strongly recommend to you, a sincere reading of this book so that you are touched by India's ordinary freedom fighters of the past in order to contribute to realizing, in due course, their mission for their ardently dreamt-vision of a free India.