

TRECENTO



THE MOMENTS



THE MEMORIES



THE PAIN



THE HAPPINESS

EDITION 19

The English Literary Society, Shri Ram College of Commerce

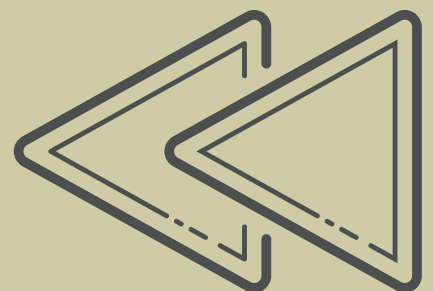
PAUSE. REWIND

December calls for reflections into the past, and gives an opportunity to peek into the future. While the year draws to a close, let's take a minute. A minute to think about ourselves, our desires, our dreams for the year ahead. A minute to be thankful for the present, the memories we made and the moments we cherished. A minute to go easy on ourselves, to pull ourselves up and to give ourselves a pat on the back.

They say life happens while we make plans. Birthdays, events, fests, captured by the lenses of the camera carefully stowed away in the phone's gallery. Wishes, greetings and compliments beautifully worded and backed up on text. The stories, anecdotes and reminiscences of our friends and family lay forgotten in ages old call logs. What are these moments worth, if they remain forgotten? These little things in life which made you smile, ought to be carried along in a new year of life. So pause. Stop and smell the coffee. Stop to have a good look at the sunset. Stop and talk to that friend you meet. Stop and share a smile, a laugh, a good memory.

Rewind to the good days. Rewind to the happy ways. Rewind to the year that flew by.

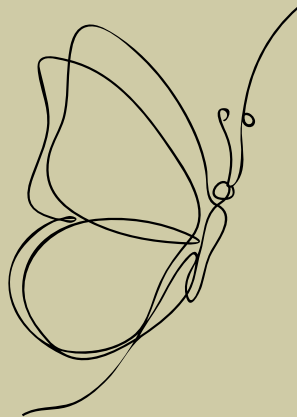
BY SARA BAPNA



A TESTAMENT

When I 'd be no longer alive,
There 'd be something for you to realise.
The dense forests, effusive lakes and surreal estuaries,
Would be the ones characterised in my Obituary.
And if you still have something to divide,
Sunder the memories, which might satiate your ravenous appetite.
The Memories, bliss for you but boon for me,
What number of trees did you cut for a chair, just to enjoy a cup of tea?
You started clearing the forest lands,
To meet your mercenary demands.
The demands which were self - centred and egocentric
In the race of minting money, you forgot what you did?
Was deforestation the only means of industrialisation and development?
When the consequences were perilous and virulent.
Being oblivion to the warning signal,
You proved to be narcissist and in-sensible.
Climatic changes, global warming, floods, soil erosion were not the only after effects,
Pray for yourself my dear as your life is in huge debts.
For I am your Mother Earth, let me predict something for you,
Not a long way to go, you 'll repay what you do.
You'll die in masses and crowds.
When there ain't a single flower to cover your shrouds.

BY SHIVANJALI KATHPAL



I Want The Sun to Shine Again
Invisible arm dragging me
Into the depth of the sea
Of darkness
Eternal, impalpable grief
Wrapped around me like a blanket,
Acerbic with hate.
I am reminded
Of your mellifluous voice
Belting out your dulcet tones
That day, on the front porch
In the morning sun.
Our dazzling faces are
Carved in my memory.
That moment
Is imprinted on my mind.
Now irrevocable.
I want the sun to shine again.

BY ARATRIKA GUHA

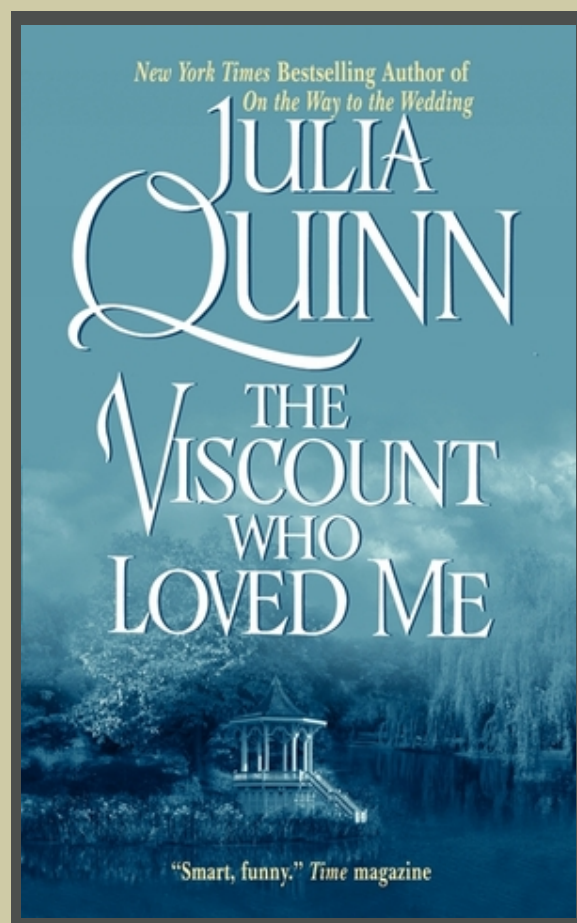
THE VISCOUNT WHO LOVED ME

By Julia Quinn

“The book was better than the movie”, is a comment often heard when comparisons are made between literature and its adaptations for the screen. Book lovers surely think that film adaptations of books miss out on the wee details that help the book fans breathe into the story and feel themselves to be a part of it. If you watch a movie or a series which is an adaptation of a book with someone and he or she happens to have read the book, then my dear, God save you. For lovers of the text, the screen can never be good enough or more specifically put, not meticulous enough!

Being a fan of Romance novels, I picked up 'The Viscount Who Loved Me', the second book under the famous Bridgerton series by Julia Quinn. Based on regency romance, the book surely will take you down an era you wished still existed! From eyes meeting at the ballroom to relishing tea in the lawns, the beautiful details in the book will rejuvenate the romantic soul in you. There are a lot of emotions one feels while reading through these pages - thrill, love, happiness, bittersweet smiles, and eyes that would well up even before you know it. In all, the book is a perfect read on a bright winter afternoon taking you to the ballrooms of the regency era and you never wanting to come back.

What strikes me the most is the sharp difference between the book and the series which is an adaptation of the same. The



series, which is *Bridgerton's* second season, released on OTT platforms earlier this year. For those who haven't read the book, it is a delight but those who are already fans of the text, were left disappointed with its adaptation.

The recasting of white characters as people of color is the biggest difference between the book and the show, and many fans were excited that Kate Sheffield would become Kate Sharma in season two. But that isn't the only thing that has changed in the adaptation.

One of the biggest changes between the books and the show is the background of the Sheffield sisters. In the book, they are blonde and pale. In the show, they are Indian—and come from India for the social season to find Edwina a husband. In the last episode, when Anthony declares his love for Kate, he calls her by her full name, Kathani Sharma. Well, to give you a little perspective, the book calls the protagonist Kate Sheffield and not Miss Sharma.

A major tension of the show is a deal Kate made with her grandparents. When Kate and Edwina's mother Mary married for love and left for India, her parents disowned her in a large scandal. But Edwina's grandparents have agreed to write her into their inheritance if she marries a man with a title. Edwina, however, doesn't know this—Kate tries to protect her younger sister from the schemes, and it blows up in her face. There's none of this plot in the book at all.

In the books, Kate is an "old maid" at age 21. In the TV show, she's 26, and insists she is not in London to find a husband for herself—but to help her younger sister, Edwina, find a match.

The twist in the story has also been played out in the show, which for sure is not well received by fans of the book. In *The Viscount Who Loved Me*, Kate is stung by a bee. Anthony, in a panic, sucks at her skin to get the venom out. Anthony's beloved father died of a bee sting—which Kate does not know at the moment—and she is befuddled by his frantic attempts to help her with the sting. In his haste to "help," he does not

think of proper behavior—and Kate's mother, Mary, Anthony's mother Violet, and Lady Featherington all spot them. To protect Kate's reputation, Anthony agrees on the spot to marry her.

In the show, the bee sting scene still occurs—but is depicted very differently. At the end of episode three, Kate and Anthony are walking through the gardens. A bee stings Kate on her chest, and Anthony has a panic attack and starts breathing heavily. Kate reassures him she is unharmed, and places his hand on her chest in an effort to calm him down. They take deep breaths together, and she tells him, "it was just a bee." They almost kiss, but then don't, and no one sees them together. For me, honestly, the show has ruined a perfect climax to the story and has disappointed text lovers like me to the core.

Not only this, but in *The Viscount Who Loved Me*, after Kate and Anthony marry, Kate deals with night terrors during thunderstorms. They are revealed to be caused by the death of Kate's mother, who died during a terrible storm. When Mary, Kate's stepmother, explains to her about the death of her mother, Anthony comforts her—and that's when Kate realizes she loves him. "With every thought, every emotion, every piece of her being, she loved him." There's a sleepless night during a storm where the two meet in a library, and Kate mentions how her father used to read to her to comfort her during monsoons, but Kate does not struggle with storms to the extent she does in the book.

To top it all, in the show, the Queen hosts the wedding of Anthony Bridgerton and Edwina Sharma and they almost get married. Wait, whhaaa....? Did the show just successfully ruin the entire plot? To be honest, yes it did.

What does exist in the books is a wedding between Anthony and Kate, but to our disappointment, that does not happen on screen in the TV show.

All in all, the story is swoon worthy and makes you feel that you belong to the world of beautiful gowns, diamonds, ballrooms, dance, music and art, basically everything that regency romance has to offer! Happy reading.

BY TEJASWANI SAKHUJA

LETTERS FROM KARGIL; VIJYANT AT KARGIL

The author of Letters from Kargil is Diksha Dwivedi, an ex-SRite who had met me very recently as shown in the photo below, along with her sister Neha, who is the author of the book, Vijyant at Kargil. The former is a daughter's homage to her deceased father, and the latter is a tribute to a daredevil young martyr, who could be a role model for the patriotic youth more than willing to sacrifice their lives in defending our country against its enemies.

Diksha had done Econ Honours at SRCC, albeit with her passion more in theatre than economics. But she has made it in “Building Brands through High-Performance Content”, and arrived to say, inter alia, thus: “I believe that storytelling has the power to change and make mindsets and is a robust way to build brands. In my 7-year long career, I have been a founder—founded AkkarBakkar.com which at its peak was amassing 10 mil views/month, and YOSO which was a marketing agency that helped start-ups tell their stories in the most ingenious ways to their audience—offline and online.”





These two books have generated in me unmanageable mixed feelings. On the one hand, I am reminded of my NCC days and C-certification through which I was offered a commissioned officer's job after my B.A. Had I chosen it, I too would have participated in the Kargil War or some other war, and my family could have movingly felt my heroic loss as every slain soldier's family takes it anywhere.

Celebrating war heroism and bemoaning and coping with personal tragedies is one thing and

contextualising this in a broader, uncontrollable fearsome and vicious context is another, like you feel when you see the movie "War Machine", which portrays an absurdist war story for our times. What is going on? And are we all going to die sooner or later, directly or indirectly, in a meaningless war at the behest of zealots and megalomaniacs?

Militarism along with left and right despotic populism is now on the rise in the world. Many individuals will lose their lives in the process, and their families will be engulfed in unbearable sorrow. What is the point? What is the point of a posthumous award?

I would rather prefer to be a pacifist, like one among the Women in Black protesting motionless against militarism and war.

There is an incredibly large and destructive military world in this small planet dotted on an infinite cosmic scale of celestial objects. You can study its bewildering political economy, sociology and anthropology. It is high time we took a critical stance against the military institution and the state in whose services the soldiers are temporarily employed, and their families bear the psychological costs and economic consequences of their death.

There is nasty and toxic politics leading to a humongous military-industrial complex bent upon ruining the world, which is ignored by the neoclassical/mainstream courses in Economics of War or Defence and Security Economics.

There is military sociology, which examines issues such as military recruiting, race and gender representation in the military, combat, military families, military social organization, war and peace, and the military as welfare.

There is also anthropological study of military violence, focussing not only on the victims' perspectives but also on the study of elites, which provides insight into topics such as power, hierarchy, leadership, authority, and the construction of sociocultural identities.

Both sociology and anthropology along with military-industrial complex help in understanding the role of capitalism and imperialism in conjunction with pre-capitalist atavistic expansionist human drives in bringing about the mad "war machine" and mercenary attitudes.

It can be argued well that militarism is bad for environment. There are many propositions to consider. Militaries are notorious polluters. Militarism robs other social needs. Nuclear weapons are an environmental catastrophe. Nuclear waste is an environmental disaster. Military toxins poison the poor and people of colour. Militaries are exempt from environmental regulation. War destroys ecosystems and livelihoods. War destroys health and sanitation infrastructure. War poisons many generations of civilians. War kills people. War promotes beastly qualities in human beings.

In this broader milieu, should we glorify the soldiers as heroes? There is Quora discussion in this regard. For example, there is the view that "Soldiers are at higher risk of being killed compared to other professions. Therefore, they deserve to be glorified." And, by contrast, there is the view that "Soldiers are nothing but glorified watchmen. They get paid (taxpayers' money) for the job they do. They are no different than the security you have outside your house. Why would anyone want to die for a piece of land? Samuel Johnson, who compiled the English dictionary once

said: “Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel.” Meaning that any crime and any misbehaviour was tolerated as long as it was committed by one who kept shouting that he loved his country. And, on the other hand, the individual who questioned the behaviour of the country or government was a traitor, no matter how noble he/she was. In our time and in our country, too, this is true.”

It is interesting to find out from soldiers themselves not only the nitty gritty plus and minus details of their personal military life but also how they understand the enemy soldiers and what they make out of their role under the canopy of militarism and war machine.

I am beholden to the two books taken up here for review for generating nostalgic liking for my NCC days along with uncomfortable thoughts in me on these lines.

In the final analysis, I distinctly prefer to be with John Maynard Keynes' *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. And I also prefer to be on the side of peace activists. I am grateful to the role of Red Cross people to protect and assist victims of armed conflict and promote understanding and respect for international humanitarian law.

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