

If books could talk

This Wednesday, let's give books a chance to tell their stories!

Photo: R. Shivaji Rao



Its worth it Mint fresh or tattered, every book has its value

“Look at you! You are all tattered, wrinkled and discoloured. Why don't you do something about it?” the mint-condition book, who was appropriately called Mint, almost screamed at the poor old one. “No wonder all of us call you Tattered Cover!” she continued sarcastically, while perched royally on the book shelf.

“But what can I do, Mint?” asked Tattered Cover sadly, with a hint of protest in her voice. “I wish our owner, Mr Reader, had wrapped me in a nice water-proof cover. I would have been saved the agony of getting soiled when he carelessly placed me on the wet table last month. And yesterday was actually a nightmare. Mr Reader's young son wanted to pick his favourite book from the top shelf and while he was trying to reach her, five of us fell down. I actually fell right on his pizza; the ketchup and vegetables were all over me. He did clean me and put me back here, but I still stink. I feel horrible,” Tattered Cover said almost tearfully.

“Oh, I am so sorry!” Mint now seemed to have mellowed down. “But tell me how did you lose all your colour and sheen?”

“That's another sad story, Mint. Mr Reader used to read me on his way to and from office. After he was through with me, he just left me in his car. I lay there for almost ten days with the scorching sun hitting directly at me through the glass windows.”

“How heartless!” Mint sounded angry now.

“I don't think he is heartless, Mint. I heard him tell his wife that he did really regret it. Also, you know, I am one of his favourites. He has already read me thrice over, that too cover to cover. I love it when he turns my pages and when at times he just puts me on his lap and contemplates on what I have to offer. I heard him tell his friend that he finds me really thought-provoking. I feel proud and don't mind the wrinkles at all. After all, they prove my worth, don't they?” It was Mint's turn to feel sad now for she had been lying there on the bookshelf for almost eight months and nobody in Mr. Reader's family had cared to even glance at her. Tattered Cover felt for her and apologised, “I am sorry, Mint, to have hurt your feelings, but why doesn't anyone ever read you?”

“My story is actually sadder than yours, Tattered Cover. I was gifted to Mr Reader by one of his friends, who didn't care to check what kind of books he is fond of. You know, he doesn't read my kind of books. I hope people will be more careful in gifting books and not just gift us for the heck of it! After all we are not showpieces.”

“I know,” replied Tattered Cover, “I just hope now that Mr Reader senses your grief and decides to gift you to somebody who will value you. I will miss you though.”

“I will miss you too, Tattered Cover, but then, I would prefer to be read and be like you rather than remain Mint all my life.”

“Or maybe you could be both,” exclaimed Tattered Cover and they both burst out laughing!

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