



PenChant

Reviews on Books, Movies and More...

Volume 8: February, 2023

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From us to you ...

Getting lost in a book feels like deja vu, like visiting a place we've been a thousand times in a past life. It is to find delight in the deepest pleasures of our own soul and to glow in the hope of eternal possibility.

Getting lost in an enjoyable movie is like being a child again. It is pillow fights and imaginary friends. It is to be unreachable by all we wish to be invisible from, to be happily floating, and willingly unrooted. It is to be fully content and unconsciously aware of the expansion of our own mind.

Getting lost in the notes of music is like transcending time. It is disorienting beyond belief, startling, life affirming. It is relaxation, sadness, dreaminess, triumph and all that is subjective.

Shelley wrote that the sweetest songs tell of saddest thought. To get lost in things that one loves is not to get lost at all. To get lost in such is simply just to find ourselves in worlds of our own to be discovered.

Do turn the pages of this issue to help you find your happy place and space.

Ruhi Kalita

X



Virginia Woolf *Orlando*



During the interwar period, Woolf was a significant figure in London literary society and a member of the Bloomsbury Group. Her most famous works include the novels *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), and *Orlando* (1928), and the book-length essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929) with its famous dictum,

“A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction.”

The background is vital because it adds so much and it helps the reader to reach an understanding of Woolf’s generosity. It is as ever, beautifully written and drifts splendidly through the centuries and the key is Vita and their circle.

It is as if we are caught in a labyrinth of stories, the main character, born in the time of “Queen Elizabeth”, never dies, but in every period, and in every century, the skin changes; someone else becomes, to reach the age of



Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando* ‘the longest and most charming love letter in literature’, playfully constructs the figure of Orlando as the fictional embodiment of Woolf’s close friend and lover, Vita Sackville-West. It was first published on 11th October 1928. Spanning three centuries, the novel opens as Orlando, a young nobleman in Elizabeth’s England. At the midpoint of the novel, Orlando, now an ambassador in Constantinople, awakes to find that he is now a woman, and the novel indulges in farce and irony to consider the roles of women in the 18th and 19th centuries. As the novel ends in 1928, a year consonant with full suffrage for women. Orlando, now a wife and mother, stands poised at the brink of a future that holds new hope and promise for women. The book is considered a feminist classic, it has been written about extensively by scholars of women’s writing and gender and transgender studies.^w

the reader. Personally, *Orlando* is a dream come true in literature. It is the quintessence of what reading means in life - the opportunity to leave your own life behind and step into the body and soul of another, only to move on again when one feels like it. *Orlando* is someone who seeks life, is fascinated by writing and continues to write at the height of despair, and at the pinnacle of happiness which should be a lesson for us in life. *Orlando*’s core character and interests are consistent: nature, literature, and later, a quest for “life and a lover”. z

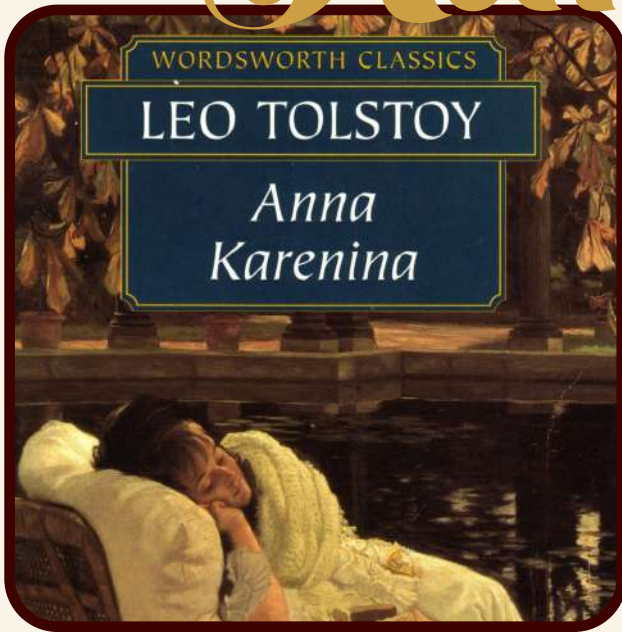
“Society is everything and society is nothing,” is a powerful line from the story which is still very relevant in today’s world. Therefore, I would recommend reading this astounding book as it is a hymn to reading, imagination and love. It is a break from conventions, and a story heavy as a heart and light as a feather.

Adella F. Massar
XII HB





Anna **Leo Tolstoy** Karenina



Anna Karenina is a fictitious novel by Leo Tolstoy, the renowned nineteenth century Russian author. It was first published in 1878. Though originally published in Russian by The Russian Messenger publication house, many translations of it are available today. It is literary realism. The themes of love and death emerge in this book. Since its initial release, this book has become incredibly popular, maybe in part because its main subjects are two of the most intense and universal experiences that people encounter. The story is set in 19th century Moscow. The suggested reading audience would be sixteen years and above.

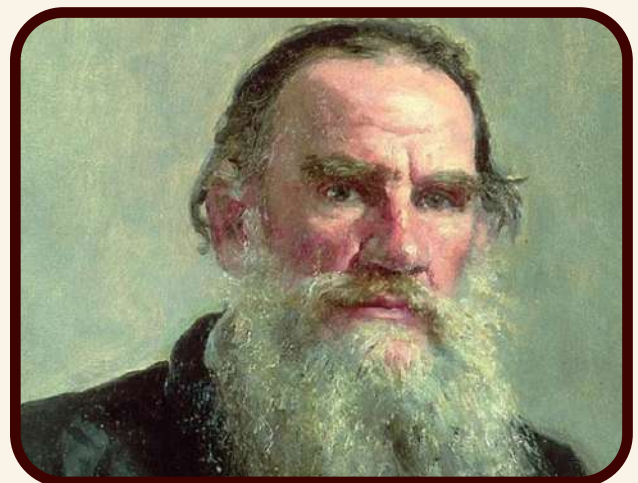
The novel opens with the statement: "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way", setting a philosophical mood which pervades through as the pages are turned. The story commences with a marital mayhem in the Oblonsky house when Dolly learns about her husband Stiva's affair. Stiva's sister, Anna Karenin the protagonist, is the beautiful and educated wife of Alexei Karenin, a cold government official and arrives to help the couple to overcome it and discourages Dolly from filing for divorce. Anna there meets Lieutenant Alexei

Vronsky and is drawn to him. Their affair becomes fervid and is judged by everyone in high society. Vronsky advises Anna to divorce her husband and wed him instead. However, Mr. Karenin "punishes" her by moving out and taking their son away rather than divorcing her. Anna is already in a miserable, frantic state, sick of all the lies and of being judged. Vronsky is worn out with her hysteria. Finally, Anna throws herself under a train.

"Anything is better than lies and deceit!" "Love those who hate you." "All the diversity, all the charm, and all the beauty of life are made up of light and shade"

These words are insights to the brilliant mind and expression of Tolstoy and gives us much to reflect upon. Tolstoy produces a dilemma of sorts in us: we want to be happy but we do not wish to be exactly like everyone else. The only way to preserve one's uniqueness—in one's "own way"—is by perhaps accepting unhappiness.

The enigmatic narrative is sure to enthrall you with its philosophical and literary intensity and leaves us to question and reflect upon life and happiness.



Hana Shanifer

XI





IT ENDS WITH US

Colleen Hoover



This fictitious novel set in Boston is about how Lily, a young college graduate, struggled through abuse in her life. She was born in an abusive family. Her mother was in an abusive relationship with her father and she also got married to a man named Ryle who also turned out to be abusive after their marriage. This book shows Lily's struggles to break this cycle of abuse and to create a safe environment for her child as well as for herself.

This book is very powerful and inspirational as well. It allows us to feel everything that Lily has gone through. This book shows us how relationships can easily be ruled and dominated by domestic violence. Themes of jealousy, emotional abuse and generational cycles are insightfully and powerfully explored. It is so easy to judge everything from the outside and say various things about "what should have been done" but the truth is, it is not easy to leave a person who you truly and genuinely love and who you thought you could spend the rest of your life with them but ***"sometimes the one who loves you the most is the one who hurts you the most."***

One of my favorite lines of the book is the opening dictation itself: "For my father, who tried his very best not to be his worst. And for my mother, who made sure we never saw him at his worst."

This book also tells us how we should "just keep swimming" when our lives get really hard and we have no clue what is coming next. We should never give up because good things are always on their way.

Hoover has interesting twists in her book and keeps the reader hooked to the narrative the entire time; what the final few pages would hold are most unpredictable. Many events in the book were inspired by real happenings of her and her mother's life.

Lastly, I would like to conclude by saying that this is actually one of the best books I have read in a long time. It has a very strong message and it is definitely worth reading.

Ruhi Kalita
X

The Great Dictator

A Movie Review

For The Good Times

“This is a story of a period between two World Wars – an interim in which insanity cut loose. Liberty took a nosedive, and Humanity was kicked around somewhat.”

Written, directed, produced, scored by, and starring British comedian Charlie Chaplin, *The Great Dictator* was Chaplin's first foray into sound films- a 1940 American anti-war film, released in 1941. This is considered Chaplin's finest work which satirised Hitler and the Nazi regime. This film was released at the time when Hitler was at the height of his power and the main character, dictator Hynkel, is obviously a reference to him. The audience in the movie is the soldiers fighting in the war for the dictator.

Hynkel wants soldiers to put down their weapons. Soldiers should stop following maniacal orders and think for themselves. The story revolves around two men: the ruthless Adenoid Hynkel, fascist dictator of Tomania, seeking to expand his territory, with dreams of conquering the world, and an amnesiac Jewish barber, the lookalike of Hynkel, who is subjected to oppression in his ghetto by the dictator's troops; both are played by Chaplin. To play two completely different characters, Hynkel and the Jewish barber, so convincingly in the same film is truly unforgettable.

The amnesiac barber, losing consciousness while serving in the first World War, awakens to a completely different world. He falls in love with Hannah, a washerwoman.

Together, they try to resist persecution, planning to go to Osterlich, a free country.

This Chaplin film makes brilliant use of its new acquisition- sound, to mockingly, yet accurately, portray dictatorial regimes in general, and Hitler's in particular. The intense, rough vocals of a galvanising dictatorial speech (like one delivered by Hitler), the many whims and fancies, insecurities, empty promises and shows of power and authority by dictators, the instances of outstanding verbal wit and humour, and the simple, beautiful kindling of hope for a better future- this movie has it all. The most famous sequence is the five-minute speech that concludes the film and Chaplin drops his comic mask and speaks directly to the world, conveying his view that people must rise up against dictators and unite in peace. Chaplin's first spoken film is brilliantly photographed by Karl Struss. The ingenious and innovative comedy delivers many priceless moments.

The film with a budget of \$2 million that dared to laugh at Hitler, grossed \$5 million in the Box office and was nominated for five Oscars. The film has words that had meaning then, and in any time of war. a story heavy as a heart and light as a feather.



Aayat Hazarika



Chet Baker Sings *chet baker*



Chet Baker is an American trumpeter and vocalist who firmly established himself in the world of jazz. He was often dubbed the most important 'cool jazz' musician, a kind of jazz characterised by soft instruments and dulcet vocals on melancholic, bittersweet lyrics.

He released the album 'Chet Baker Sings' in 1954, which propelled him to fame. The most popular

song of the album, 'My Funny Valentine' would prove to be associated with him for the rest of his life, arguably being his most famous song. The song is a collection of both lively jive songs that could be considered 'straight-style jazz', however, most notable are the songs where he lends his voice to both jazz standards and original compositions.

The album begins with 'But Not for Me', a playful confession of unrequited love, accompanied with a lively beat. Next comes 'Time After Time', a simple, heart-tugging homage to a lover (Time after time you'll hear me say that I'm/ So lucky to be loving you). Most notable here is also the trumpet that follows the

vocals, envisioned by Baker himself. The next song 'my Funny Valentine' is most synonymous with his name and features a slow, simple, almost terrifyingly-personal ballad to a lover, sung in the most down-to-earth yet effective manner. No wonder it is so famous in

the world of jazz. My personal favourite is the following song, 'I Fall in Love Too Easily' which I favour immensely due to the clever and admirable blend of piano, vocals, and brass, almost as if they were flirting with each other.

Side B hosts the songs 'There Will Never Be Another You', 'I Get Along Without You Very Well', 'The Thrill is Gone', and 'Look for the Silver Lining'. With the exception of 'There Will Never Be Another You', the songs are all tales of love long lost and love most ached for. The lyrics range from angry, desperate, hopeless, and heartbroken and the instrumentals accompany the raspy vocals with equally melancholic notes.

'Chet Baker Sings' is one of my favourite albums because of its versatility. Take an entire evening to sip coffee alone and revel in the music, perhaps dancing by yourself. It is equally beautiful to share with loved ones, background music for your most cherished memories. Either way, Baker's most popular album has cemented itself in the hearts of many as the best cool jazz album and a most enchanting album to call one's own.



Hiyaneijemmy Das
XII



HAVE NO REGRETS IN THE SIXTEENTH SECOND!

What is a success, really? We are often told, “It is not about earning the most in terms of money that one can or living a lavish and extravagant lifestyle.” Then what is success all about? How can it be best felt?

I believe that success is all about having no regrets in “the sixteenth second”. When we finally achieve something after working hard for it for many days straight, the first fifteen seconds after accomplishing it are the most enjoyable. The first fifteen seconds of one’s heart racing and adrenaline pumping; the first fifteen seconds of one shouting and screaming, “Yay!!! I won!” The first fifteen seconds of being at the top of the pile of all one’s accomplishments.

“But in the sixteenth second, one gets this feeling “now what?”

One realises that one does not know what one was working so hard for. One dimly comes to settle that one was working hard for the sole purpose of achieving a goal and that one has sacrificed everything- friends, hobbies, and better relationships-for this one goal. Then one regrets it- and that is what I mean by “having regrets in the 16th second.”

One should know the difference between enjoying one’s youth and destroying one’s future. One should not immerse everything into one aspect such as work, but invest time and sensibilities in strengthening

relationships. I believe education serves little if we do not make the world a better place with our knowledge and share what we have learned with other people. Strengthening relationships will always give us a platform to share thoughts and ideas. A lesson learned should be a lesson shared. This will also make the world a better place and at the same time, one will have no regrets in life.

Taking this point of view to consideration will help many people in their lives to feel success in a significant and lasting way. Not only will it help them deal with failure but also ensure lesser sacrifices for better rewards in the modern world, a world where meaningful relationships have been swept under the rug or flicked off like a speck of dirt.

Anushka Jitani



Nature

Nature is an important and integral part of humankind's existence. It is one of the greatest blessings we have but sadly nowadays humans fail to give it its due. Poets, artists, writers have drawn remarkable

inspiration from nature to write stories and poems in the glory of it. As impressionists and romantics, they truly valued nature which reflects in their work even today. A reference to the poem Daffodils by William Wordsworth emphasizes beautifully on how nature has healing, resuscitating and uplifting powers, and the poet laureate's eloquence when he expresses- 'I gazed and gazed but little thought what wealth the show to me had brought' referring to the

mesmerising stretch of gleeful, swaying golden daffodils that he encountered one morning as he was walking in the dales. Taking a leaf out of their book, people of the modern age should appreciate and start valuing nature to help and heal before it gets too late!



Mahiya Khemani



Thoughts on Looking at the Ocean for the First Time

There was something about looking at the sand dissipating from between my toes, as I walked on the beach for the first time. The view started with fear, changed to awe and soon after became a new sensation of fun for me. There is something about the sea that makes all the people prescribe it, at different stages of our lives for whatever reason. There is certainly a healing element to the air that boosts our lungs and spirit together. At

that time looking at the ocean in front of me and listening to the ocean waves which was so soothing to my ear, I felt energized. I felt like everything was possible. I felt like I could do anything I wanted.

There are obviously parts of this memory that have undergone several stages of evolution, thanks to the retelling of the stories from this holiday that continue to this day. However, that particular chain of emotions from my first sight, is entirely my own. I hope someday I could just relive that moment and have all those dopamine shots come blasting back.



Ruhi Kalita





Iris

The Iris, one of February's birth flowers, is said to be a symbol of wisdom, faith, and renewal of life. Many believe it was named after the Greek goddess Iris (the Greek word for "rainbow") who was a messenger between heaven and earth.

***F**ire Will always
Extinguish Unless it's
Burning in your soul.
Rain will always stop
Unless it pours
Again in your heart
Reshape your mindset and
You'll reclaim your power*

Courtesy: GOOGLE

Metaphors

A metaphor uses the characteristics of one thing to describe something else. A metaphor is similar to a simile, but does not use the words 'as' or 'like'.

The sun was a gleaming pearl.

My baby brother is a cute little teddy bear.

The lion was thunder.



My sister's memory is a camera that remembers everything we see.

The car seat is a fluffy cloud.

Custard is happiness in a bowl.

Your friend George is just a big baby!

Johnny's mouth is one huge metal factory.

The children at that school are all brains.

Javier thinks he is the class clown!

Life is one long scary roller coaster!

Mary Poppins

A Movie

“Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down, in the most delightful way!”

This is a much quoted line from the widely acclaimed 1964 Walt Disney musical fantasy film directed by Robert Stevenson with the most melodious songs written and composed by the Sherman Brothers was based on P. L. Travers’s book, *Mary Poppins*. The film, which combines live-action and animation starred Julie Andrews, an English actress, singer, and author. She is one of the last legendary surviving actresses from the Golden Age of Hollywood and this was her debut role for which she won the 1965 Oscar award for Best Actress.

The film is about a magical nanny, played by Julie Andrews, who comes to work for a cold banker’s unhappy family who live at Number 17, Cherry Tree Lane. The setting is 1910, Edwardian era London and the scene opens to Mr Banks being told that the last nanny has left because the rambunctious children, Jane and Michael, had run away. Mr. Banks advertises for a stern, no-nonsense nanny. In contrast, Jane and Michael present their own advertisement for a kinder, sweeter nanny. After the children to go to bed, Mr. Banks rips up the letter and throws the scraps in the fireplace, but a strong wind picks the bits up through the chimney and into the air.

The next day scene opens to a windy dark cold day a number of aged, sour-faced nannies wait outside the Banks’ home, but a strong gust of wind magically blows them away. Mary Poppins mysteriously descends from the clouds using her umbrella in response to the Banks children’s advertisement for a nanny. Mary Poppins reads out the advertisement : ‘Now, the qualifications... item one: a cheery disposition. Item two: rosy cheeks... obviously. Item three: play games, all sorts, Item four: you must be kind. I am kind, but extremely firm’... might serve to be a little guide on what helps to handle little/difficult children! She is firm in her use of authority but loving, gentle and kind as well.

The musical is a warm and comforting and not only just a children’s film but also for grown-ups to enjoy, having a universal appeal. Julie Andrews’ gorgeous, golden voice and

the impeccable turnout of the character, the perfect picture of no-nonsense confidence, add to the charm of the film. Dick van Dyke playing the part of a cockney chimney sweep Bert, delivers the nuances of accent and humour with energy and enthusiasm is splendid, to say the least. It’s full of exciting adventures that the children embark on along with Mary Poppins and Bert.

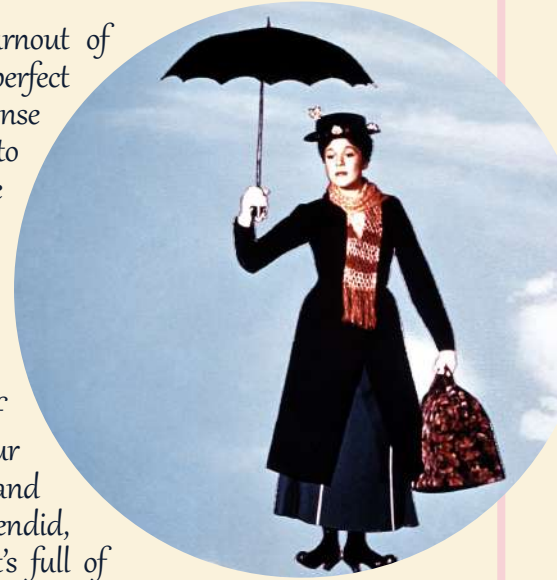
The tap dance routines are brilliant, the screenplay is magnificent and witty ;the dialogues laced with wisdom are didactic such as: ‘Well Begun is Half-Done’. ‘In every job that must be done, there is an element of fun. You find the fun, and - SNAP - the job’s a game!’

A thought on affection- “Nothing is gone forever, only out of place,” implies that understanding and propping up others help to make things better. A motivational line that wraps it all is- ‘Open different doors. You may find a you there that you never knew was yours.’

The film with a budget of \$4.4–6 million, grossed a whopping \$103.1 million at the Box office, has amazing visual effects and the cinematography is entertaining as well as impressive.

Nominated for 13 Oscars this movie has not lost its charisma and Walt Disney will be proud to know that his film has stood the test of time and is considered one of the best musical soundtracks to date which makes it undoubtedly a classic.

A delightful film with grace and style and plenty of fine tuned moral virtues hidden in the tale, is a masterpiece not to be missed.



Ms. Tamanna Seth





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Patron : The Headmaster
The Assam Valley School

Publisher : The Assam Valley School
Balipara
Asom -784101

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Penchant

An English Publication