

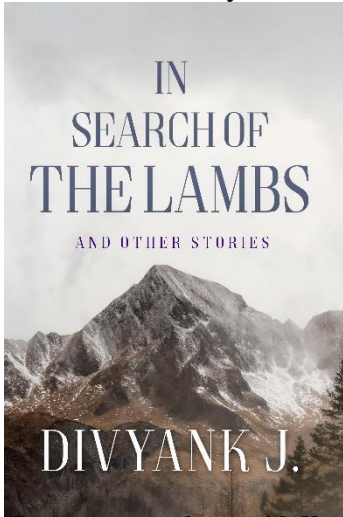


Book Review of Divyank Jain's *In Search of Lambs and Other Stories*

Dr Anmol, Assistant Professor of English

In Search of Lambs and Other Stories is an anthology of ten short stories written by Divyank Jain in a very magnificent way with emotive mention. The portrayal of hundreds of scenic appearances through his short stories shows his deep love and fondness for nature. All the short stories are symbolical and present the real phenomenon around us. The first short story, *The Long March Home* is about Omar and his nine years old boy, Jamal. They are stopped for test out at

a blockade by police officials accompanied by a doctor during Covid when they are on back journey home. Jamal has mild fever so they are retained by police



for the reason. Omar requests the policemen time and again as he is not reluctant for stay but everything seems in vain. He surely realises that they have to halt their journey and have to stay in the over occupied encampment. Hygiene is conciliated; no haulage after the camp, no adequate food for the day and the time is testing the endurance. Jamal had been struggling with the fever vehemently but failed to win the breaths. The

short story beautifully captures the poignant aspects and concerns of a father in the pandemic of Covid. *The Pigeons* is an emblematic story that speaks about the ardours, discernments, experiences and manners of life of two enthusiasts - Saurabh, a young boy and his neighbour, an old man.

Out of the Ring is a story of a young couple, Jack and Cheryl. Jack is a professional boxer and is taking part in a local tourney. Despite the fact that he has won a couple of fights so far he is not happy. He is constantly thinking that no game is bigger than the game of life. The story reflects the anxiety of every day thrash about. Cheryl tries her level best to intact with Jack who is in trauma because of the suicide of his fellow boxer, Kapil. *A City on Fire* is a mythical in nature and presents a fascinating plot line. The city of gold comes under the curse of a gloom; the demons eat up everything good and gorgeous of the city. In this call of demolition, a fifteen years young soldier, Diyon remains unaffected. He has lost his rank, his position and moreover his spirit of a soldier under the influence of *soma*.

Separation Anxiety reflects the deep emotive bond between a couple and their dog Jakie but on the other hand the story also reflects the pragmatism of human nature. Seema wants to go to Bangalore to spend summer with his kiths and kins. The dog is incredibly attached to them and fails to understand the departure. The agony of separation and most importantly the development of sympathetic attitude of the author towards stray dogs are the centre attraction in the short story. *Midnight Murder* is a gothic story that interprets a murder mystery. Porush, Chetna and Maya are the important characters. Porush is the husband of Chetna; he is described as a pervert. Porush and Maya planned the murder of Chetna without a hint of doubt. The characters are the representation of the concept of *Maya* (illusion) & *Chetna* (consciousness); when *maya* pays out, *chetna* subdues. *Back to Darkness* is a symbolical construal of the modern life; where darkness stands for the ignorance and the internal conflicts and tumult pertaining to the very existence. Ravi doesn't give up during sexual assault on him by his uncle. The repressed obsession comes back and it doesn't understand the erroneous and ingenuous. The skyscrapers and the lights around symbolically present the modern advancement but on the contrary it camouflaged the underground heinous world of misdemeanour and crime.

Dead River is very touchy story; it reflects the perspective of younger for the world wrapped in wonder around them. Divya, a nine-years-old little girl who finds the sacred river elegant and fascinating. Her father tells her about the sanctity of the river and the obligatory rituals for that they have arrived here. Divya has lost her mother recently; she is on this foray with her father to put the ashes of her departed mother into the sacred river. When Divya reached on the bank of the river, she finds the river filthy and muddy. She becomes surprised to find that the crystal clear water has turned dull green. The river looks ugly, full of trashes and garbage, muddy and grubby. *The Curtain and the Clouds* is an interesting story

of a young couple Teena and Rahul. Their relationship has not been working because of an incident that took place three years ago. They have been lingering it on without having words on it. One day during covid-19, they have opened up to the situation but failed to wrap up.

In Search of the Lambs is the most magnificent anecdote of this anthology. This short story records the internal feelings of an old man and a young commanding officer. A newly appointed commanding officer was ordered to clear out a village in Kashmir Valley in a single day. Despite the harsh winter conditions, the officer and his searching-unit worked tirelessly to evacuate the villagers. They successfully escorted the villagers without any causality. During their further search, they found a village destroyed by massacre, with over a hundred villagers were killed and many dead bodies buried under debris. The young commanding officer found an old blind man in a cottage of a war-torn village. He chose to remain in the village; he was patiently waiting for his lost lambs' return. The young officer assured him to come back later to look for his lambs and carried him down the hill. The old man was gazing back time and again for the lost lambs to come back. The story profoundly records the sense of loss and decay.

Title: [In Search of Lambs and Other Stories](#)

Author: Divyank Jain

Available: [Amazon](#)

About the author: Divyank Jain

Divyank writes stories about animals, mountains, and broken people on their journey to healing. Currently, he resides in Udaipur, Rajasthan, India with his family. In 2022 he earned his master's in English literature and started a quarterly literary arts journal, The Hemlock. Apart from writing, he teaches accountancy to young students, draws pencil sketches, spends time with his daughter, and on weekends often goes out on trips with his dog.

About the reviewer: Dr Anmol

Dr Anmol has been working as Assistant Professor in the Department of Higher Education, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh. He teaches UG & PG classes and having 12 years of diverse experience in teaching at schools and colleges. He has also attended several workshops on Literature & Languages and presented his research papers as well.

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