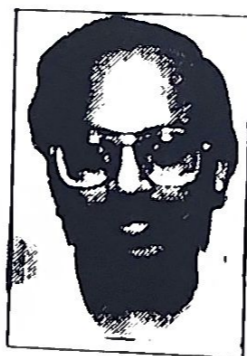


Writers need not know how to write

The system is good. A talented youngster shines in a college football game. The scouts spot him. In the next draft, he is signed for a contract of a million or two by one of the professional teams. Another smart girl does extremely well in finance. A leading bank recruits her for a handsome salary, including perks. But when it comes to a student thinking of making a career in writing, it is an entirely different ball game. There must be talent scouts even in the literary world. There are prestigious publishing houses with millions of dollars waiting to be distributed.

To understand these standards we only have to look back on their recent coups that turned out to be best sellers.

There was this notorious international criminal. Charles Showbraj, whose trick of the trade was to dope and kill the tourists, then fleece them. He had assumed many roles in different countries for his nefarious activities before he was caught. While he was in jail, one of those literary-scouts with an ear on the jail grounds convinced his publisher to part with a minor fortune in exchange for an exclusive story from the criminal. The best part was the criminal need



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not do the actual writing; that was arranged by the publisher.

Then there was this voluptuous singer, Madonna, who always thought about publicity strategy. All her shows were sell outs — she was a good crooner. She came up with the brilliant idea of writing bits and pieces here and there, and printing them in a book full of her photographs with hardly any bits of clothing. The only piece of covering was the polyethylene sealed wrapper around the book to plug the leakage of sales due to peeping Toms browsing in book shops.

In order to make money in the publishing world, a person need not be a writer. The person need not have good credentials.

In fact, the greater the notoriety the greater the chance for success. Mostly, what is required is some weird strategy to catch the imagination of the public. In other words, publicity and

marketing potentials precede the writing talent. Not surprised, I suppose.

Okay, let me put it this way: Imagine hiring a psychopath, who can't tell the difference between a baseball and a football, drafted by the NFL, being paid millions because the psychopath has been in the limelight because he was a serial killer before he was caught. Well now, that is a surprise!

That is the problem in choosing writing as a career. In this field you don't have to be a professional writer to achieve success! Talent scouts don't look for talent here. That reminds me of the news that most of these scouts are now camping in Singapore. I heard the chances of becoming the writer of a best seller are very good for visitors to Singapore.

In fact, I have been to Singapore a couple of times a few years back and let me assure you, I am not one of those popular writers.

Still skeptical? Okay, it would be indecent to expose, but believe me there are no lash marks anywhere on my body, let alone on my butt!

"... there are no lash marks anywhere on my body, let alone on my butt!"

— Pulikal Bhaskar

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