

GT Author's Desk

Sharanya Dobhal, a student of Class XII, AIS Vas 6, is a published author with Scholastic through the Writer's Academic Programme, which identifies promising young writers across the country. Her story 'Who let the humans out' is featured in *The Wacky Compendium of Stories*, a splendid anthology of 18 imaginative tales. Apart from writing, Sharanya enjoys drawing, travelling, and envisioning action-packed fight sequences set to music. She tells **Arpita Chakraborty, GT Network**, that literature is a canvas of infinite possibilities devoid of any rules. No wonder then, she excels in merging elements of fantasy, humour, and intrigue when she puts her pen to paper.

Short and sweet

My journey into storytelling began in Class IX when we were given an assignment on short story writing. I would always exceed the word limit, and my teacher would tell me that a short story was supposed to be just 120 words, not four pages! Later, I participated in a novel blurb contest, where I had to propose an idea for a story. These experiences made me believe that I could write for sure.

A quirky tale

Myriad influences

My stories are influenced by music, movies, and books that I love. I had recently watched *Planet of the Apes* and was reading *Foul Lady Fortune*, an intriguing spy story. So, I decided to combine the two elements of fantasy and drama and create a society that is run by animals. What excites me the most about fantasy is that it has no limits. I can make anything fly, give anyone super-powers, or even make an elderly character a legendary warrior. So, the spies in my story are not young or agile, they are 50-60 years old, dealing with hypertension while trying to complete their mission! I love adding my own touch of wacky humour!

Quirky characters

My story has two main characters - Chase and Rosa, a married spy duo. Rosa is my favourite. She's confident, sassy, and dominates in a funny way, while her husband just agrees with her. Despite her boldness, she has an appealing vulnerability and deep love for her husband. Apart from Chase and Rosa, there are several other quirky characters. In this world, animals have reached human-like consciousness and run the

show, while humans are a minority.

Writing process

I have the habit of noting down ideas, as I never want to forget a good one. I just scribble on paper without worrying about the structure or the word limit. When I revisit these ideas, I remove the unnecessary parts and retain what makes sense. I'm not very good at time management, so I time-block a lot. Thankfully, for this programme, we were required to write for only one hour a day so this structured approach helped me in balancing academics with writing.

The challenges

My main challenge was adhering to the word limit. Once I start writing, I struggle to stop. My mentor helped me cut down the words and avoid over-explaining. I learned that I don't need to paint the entire setting in excessive detail. But I must also admit that it was writing for GT that gave me the confidence to express myself freely and also the assurance that others actually like what I write.

Message for Amitians

Never be afraid that you won't be able to write. You just have to start. And yes, write down each and every idea.



Sharanya Dobhal with her book

Movie Review

Crafty cons and chasing cops

Movie: Catch Me If You Can
Directed by: Steven Spielberg
Released on: December 25, 2002
Starring: Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hanks, Amy Adams, James Brolin
Genre: Crime, Comedy



Synopsis: Frank Abagnale Jr, a young and ingenious con artist, executes a series of daring impersonations and perpetrates embezzlement across the US and beyond, amassing millions. Pursued by FBI agent Carl Hanratty, the story unfolds as a thrilling cat and mouse game. Frank, posing as a pilot, doctor, and lawyer, constantly outsmarts authorities, but his life of deception eventually catches up with him. The film, marked by both light-hearted and poignant moments, culminates in Frank's capture and subsequent transformation. He

ultimately turns his life around, going from a notorious fraudster to an invaluable aid to the FBI in fraud detection, showcasing a journey of redemption and the unusual bond formed between the hunter and the hunted.

Why is it worth watching: The film masterfully weaves a narrative that is as entertaining as it is insightful, by delving into the themes of identity, deception, and redemption. It's one of the few tales that does not glorify a striking swindler who selfishly breaks hearts and trust, but instead the storyline pushes him to tread on

an altruistic journey. Its blend of humour, drama, and suspense, set against the vivid backdrop of the 1960s, makes it not just a captivating crime story, but also a reflection on the complexities of human nature. The film's engaging storyline, exceptional performances, and historical relevance make it a must-watch.

Iconic dialogue: "Why do the Yankees always win? The other team can't stop staring at the pin-stripes."

Rating: 5/5

Review By: Gaurika Rana
 AIS Noida, XII M

GT Travels to Tamil Nadu



Ritu Srivastava, middle school coordinator of AIS PV, poses with her copy of GT in front of the Adiyogi statue at Isha Yoga Centre, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The 34-metre tall, 45-metre long, and 25-metre wide steel bust of Shiva is recognised by the Guinness World Records as the 'Largest Bust Sculpture' in the world.

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