

# REFLECTIONS

April 2019





Editor-in-Chief: Hemalatha Meenakshi Sundaram

Editorial Board: Jose Kunju, Anula Lydia, and K. Mohankumar

Design and Layout: Anthuvan

Front & Back Covers: Shutterstock

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:  
I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Editorial Board: Jose, Lydia, and Mohan, for their unconditional support. Thanks are due to Srinivasan and Anthuvan, who have been my pillars of strength.

Your feedback and suggestions are most welcome. Please send in your contributions before 15 June 2019 to [Reflections@newgen.co](mailto:Reflections@newgen.co)



Tell us

What we're doing right and what we're doing wrong and what you think of this issue. We'd love to hear from you.

**NewGen**  
KnowledgeWorks

# REFLECTIONS

January 2019



There are far better things ahead than any we leave behind.

— C.S. Lewis



◉ Amazing, Amazing Issue!!!  
The beauty, the talent and the emotion that is held within these 30 pages are incredible. This is an issue for the ages!!!! My hats off to all who participated in their own inimitable way!!!  
WOW — *Deborah Shor, Head of Content Operations, Oxford University Press*

◉ As always, this is excellent — really informative, fun and shows what brilliantly talented staff Newgen have! Thanks so much for sharing! — *Emma Lonie, Academic Pre-press Supplier Manager, Oxford University Press*

◉ Thanks for sending this over! It was lovely to read through on this rainy Friday morning from the NY office. Happy New Lunar Year ☺ — *Salma Ismaiel, Editorial Assistant, Religion & Bibles, Oxford University Press*

◉ This was fun to flip through. Very sweet to see people's personalities and interests. — *Julie Mullins, Assistant Editor, Oxford University Press*



For more ideas on how to replace plastic, checkout this article called "35+ alternatives to plastic items in your home" at Sustainable Baby Steps: <http://www.sustainablebabysteps.com/alternatives-to-plastic.html>







6

Olive Ridley Turtles  
~ Micky Joseph



10

The Pearl of the  
Indian Ocean  
~ Pradhiba

18

Events @ Newgen



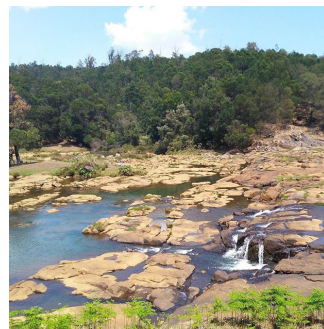
20/21

Spotlight  
on Lydia & Srikanth



27

OUP Offsite  
~ Vignesh



31

Queen of the Hills  
~ Tharani



# 16

A Fascinating Hobby  
~Rajalakshmi  
Senbagaraman



# 17

Farewell  
~ Rajalakshmi  
Senbagaraman



# 23

Poem  
~Dipak



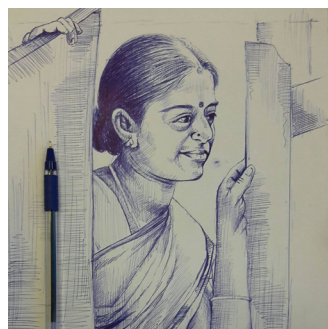
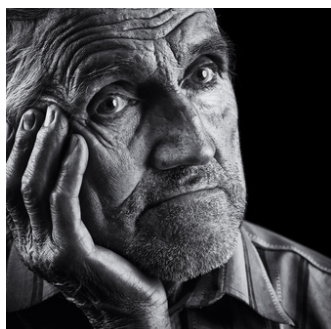
# 24

Small Steps Towards  
Big Changes  
~ Vijee



# 38

Poem  
~ Arockia Alexander



# 40

Kalam's Book of  
Records  
~ Jayakumar V. S.

Look inside  
for more





# Olive Ridley Turtles



Micky Joseph is the manager of Corporate Social Responsibilities at Newgen.

.....

An injured turtle has no option but to live in a 3-foot water tub for his entire life. This turtle was injured because of man's selfish needs, then why is there no punishment for humans? – Krishna Kumar



**K**rishna Kumar is a 13-year-old boy who attends the After School Program at Nandavanam Learners Club. He shared his anguish after participating in the “Olive Ridley Turtle Awareness Program” field trip, held on 19th March, which was part of our “Outside Textbook Learning” program. He was genuinely touched by the plight of the injured turtle.

The Outside Textbook Learning program exposes the children\* to a multitude of experiences and learning outside the scope of their regular curriculum. The program also serves as an opportunity to educate children on social behavior and holding oneself in social settings in a responsible and coherent manner.

---

\*These are children from the Learners Club After School Program, which caters to underprivileged children from the Chinna Neelankari Kuppam. The program provides academic help to children and builds on skills required for academic success. Along with their academic curriculum, these additional programs help the children acquire life-improving, social and emotional skills. Outside Textbook Learning is one such program.









Many such programs have been conducted in the past year. This term's program was on Olive Ridley Sea Turtle Conservation. Olive Ridley turtles are the second smallest sea turtles found in warm and tropical waters. They are currently the most abundant of all sea turtles. Their vulnerable status comes from the fact that they only nest in very few places, and therefore, any disturbance to nest beaches could have huge repercussions on the entire population. These turtles are

considered endangered because of the few remaining nesting sites. One such nesting site is our beach in Chennai.

This program was structured to help the children comprehend issues related to Ridley turtle nesting and how they can contribute toward creating a safer space for the turtles to nest. The program started with a visit to the Tree Foundation, followed by a documentary on Ridley turtles and their current situation. The facilitator then introduced them to the injured turtles and shared the reason why the turtles could no longer be sent back to the ocean. A turtle needs a minimum of three flippers, and many of the turtles cared for at the Tree Foundation have only two flippers, and some even have a cracked shell.

At last, the children made their way to the beach to see the turtle hatchlings get released into the closest current in the ocean. Here, the children learned various facts about the fascinating journey of a hatchling from egg to adult. There are many challenges throughout this journey and sadly, only 1 out of 1,000 hatchlings make it.

The children thoroughly enjoyed the program and had many pertinent questions:

- How does the use of plastic hurt the turtle?
- Why on a particular day do so many turtles wash up dead on the shore?
- Why does the act of humans goes unpunished?
- Why do turtles emerge only in the night?
- Why do the hatchlings hatch during the night?
- How does the use of light affect the nesting process?
- How do small turtles know to follow the moon light?

And the children also had the following to share:



- "We should not use plastic, we have to ban plastics in our country" - Avyukt
- "It is so fascinating to see how a tiny hatchling, smaller than our palm, grows to be a huge turtle over 2 feet" - Kritikka
- "I will ask my father to release any turtle that gets caught in his net/boat" - Soundarya
- "Though we live in the beach, we did not know these things. I am going to ask everybody in my neighborhood to switch off the lights after night and use as less light as possible during the evening hours" - Nethra

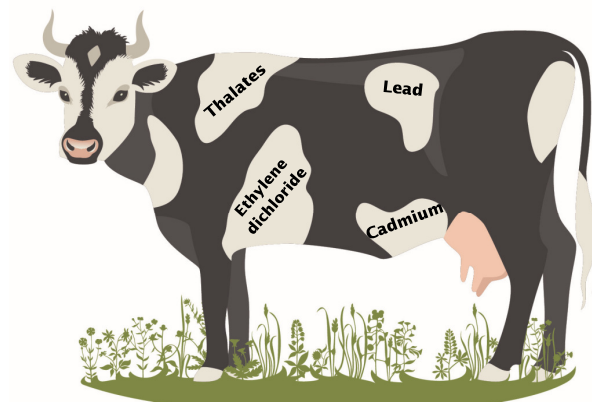
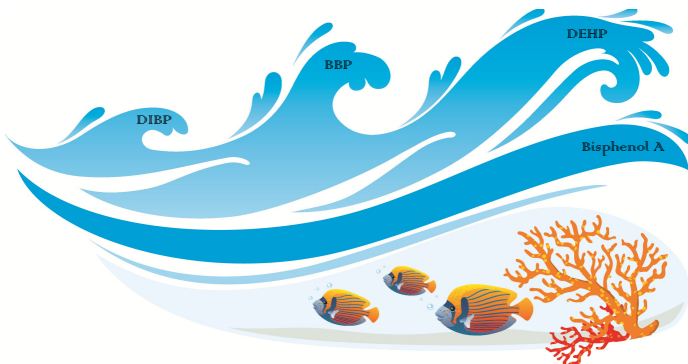


We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.  
~ Anon.

## PLASTIC POLLUTION



Athulya S. G. is a senior executive with the Centralized Journals Copy Editing team.



Conceptualized by Athulya.



# The Pearl of the Indian Ocean: Sri Lanka

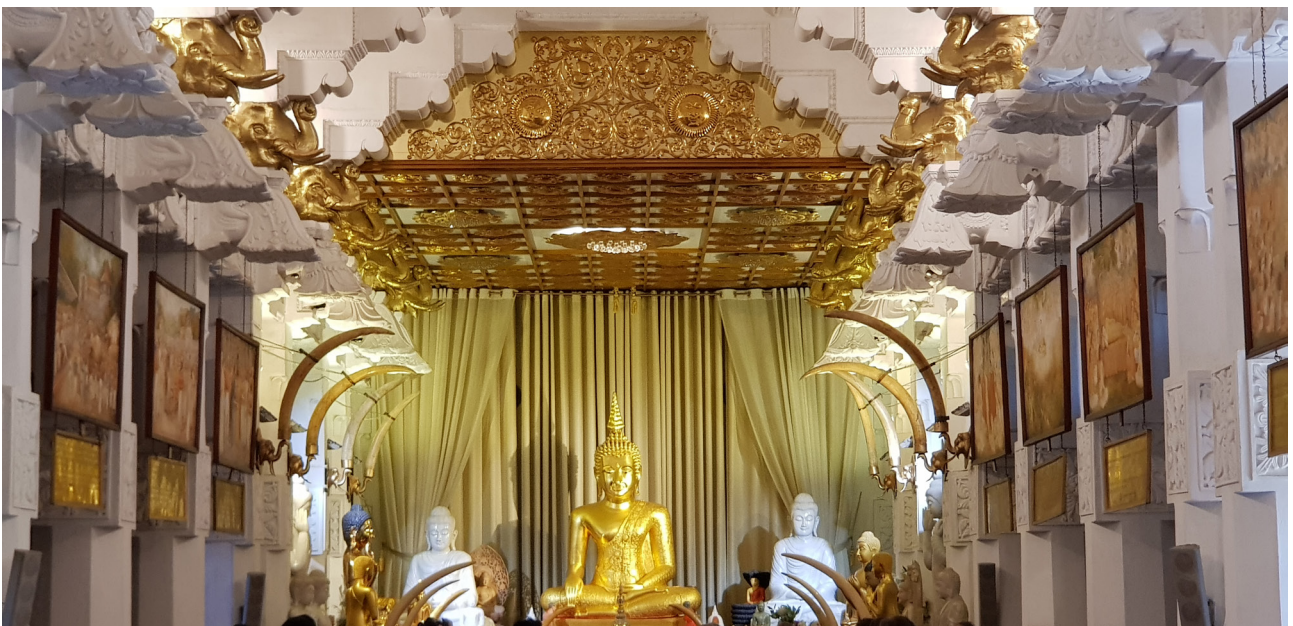


Pradhiba is a senior production editor in the Kluwer Law International team.

When you hear about family vacations, you often hear stories of family bonding and laughter. My husband and I try to get away for a family vacation with our son once a year. The setting for our most recent adventure was a 4-day trip to Sri Lanka.

## Chennai to Kandy

On 26 December 2018, in the early hours after Christmas, we left Chennai, India, at 4:30 am and reached Colombo, Sri Lanka, at 5:50 am. The pleasant weather and the slight drizzle were a welcome change for us. Being a foodie, I wanted to try one of the





restaurants in the airport famous for serving hot prawn and fish buns at 7 in the morning. We had a nice breakfast and then booked ourselves a cab to the Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage which has the world's largest herd of elephants in captivity. Pinnawala takes in young, abandoned elephants and rehabilitates injured ones with a plan to release them back into the wildlife reserves.

From the elephant orphanage, we made our way to Kandy, Sri Lanka's second largest city as well as an ancient capital of one of the nation's former kingdoms. We enjoyed watching the Kandyan Dance performed by men and women in their traditional costumes. Sri Lanka is also famous for precious stones. We toured a gem company and the entire mining process was explained to us. Some of the most beautiful blue sapphires in the world come from the alluvial gem mines of Sri Lanka.

### **Kandy to Nuwara Eliya**

It was raining in Kandy and that made our stay very pleasant. Early in the morning, we headed to the Tooth Relic of Buddha, a temple in Kandy which houses a relic of the tooth of Buddha. This sacred tooth relic was brought from India during the 4th century and holds both religious and political significance.

We did some shopping after the temple visit and started our journey to Nuwara Eliya, a city perched in the tea country hills of Sri Lanka. Known for its temperate, cool climate, the city has the finest view of Piduruthalagala, the tallest mountain in Sri Lanka and the location of some of the finest tea plantations. En route, we visited the Anjaneya Temple and the Blue Field Tea Garden. The staff at the Blue Field Tea Garden took us on a tour of the grounds and the factory to see how the beverage in your cup makes its way from the field to the table. We also sampled some of the fragrant white and black teas produced on site. The factory's shop is also a great place to pick up souvenirs to take home.

As time passed by, the temperature went down to 2 degrees Celsius. Before heading to our hotel room, we decided to enjoy the outdoors at Victoria Park. This public park was originally the research field of the Hakgala Botanical Garden. It is also the best spot to take memorable photos with your family.

### **Nuwara Eliya to Bentota**

After a healthy breakfast, we decided to visit the Seetha Amma Temple located in the village of Seetha Eliya. This is believed to be the place from the epic Ramayana where









Seetha Matha had spent her days imprisoned by King Rawana roughly 5,000 years ago. The temple is surrounded by a beautiful forest and a waterfall.

Our next destination was Bentota: a coastal paradise with beautiful resorts. The drive to Bentota was 6 hours long through beautiful hills and vegetation. We stayed at The Surf





resort, a beautiful property with a private beach. We had a sea-facing room and enjoyed long walks on the beach at sunset.

### **Bentota to Colombo**

The last day of our trip.

We left Bentota and reached Kosagoda Turtle Care Centre, which functions mainly as a hatchery. Huge efforts are being made to increase the rate of turtle hatching and to ensure the survival of turtles during their initial stages.

Next, we headed to Madhu River for a boat ride. My son was thrilled at the prospect of riding on a boat and visiting many small islands situated on the river. During the 3-hour boat ride, we saw various kinds of monkeys, monitor lizards, and birds. We even had a natural fish spa during the ride. One of the small islands we visited is known as the Cinnamon Island, where tribal people grow and export cinnamon to countries all over the world. The warm and uplifting smell of cinnamon welcomed us as we stepped on to the island. Finally, we were taken to the spot where the Madhu River meets the Indian Ocean. It was a mesmerizing scene.

After our lunch, we reached the capital city. Colombo is a beautiful city that is a mix of fine colonial architecture and high-rise buildings and shopping malls. We explored the city before reaching the airport at 5:30 pm to return to India.



Sri Lanka's endless beaches, timeless ruins, welcoming people, adorable elephants, rolling surf and vegetation, shopping, teas, and flavourful food made our visit memorable.





# A Fascinating Hobby



Rajalakshmi Senbagaraman is a project manager in the OUP UK Law team.

.....

**C**an you imagine a hobby that could quench your thirst for creativity, provide amusement, and serve your artistic pursuits all at the same time? The answer is yes and my response: crochet.

I tried to learn to crochet for the fourth time in September 2018. However, this time I was in good hands and I excelled at it. The sessions were more than 4 hours long and I thought I had learnt everything and was confident that I could make anything I wanted to create.

But then when I initiated a project, I ended up with a triangle, although I initially intended to create a rectangle. So I began exploring the work of my colleagues and I approached my tutor for tips. It soon dawned on me that there is whole world of crochet out there and that it would take me decades to explore it fully.

My tutor, Diem, is a wonder woman who has changed me today by providing me with fantabulous perspectives on stuff related to crochet, which I find relatable to many practicable attributes in life. I am still working on many projects and trying to learn and explore new stitches.





# Farewell ...



Rajalakshmi Senbagaraman is a project manager in the OUP UK Law team.

**D**iem presented the housekeeping staff at Newgen with beautiful handmade flower hair clips. As you can see from the photographic evidence, there is no end to her creativity and gratitude. She also took the time to teach crochet to one of the staff during her break times. We're sad to see her move back to the States, but we at Newgen wish her much happiness at her new place.





# Events @ Newgen







5



6



7



8



9

*Team outings:* (1, 2) Centralized Books Copyediting and Journals Preediting and Copyediting teams; (3, 4) Centralized Books Preediting team; (5) CUP Education Division team. *Other events:* (6) Eureka Run 2019; (7-9) London Book Fair.



## Spotlight on

# Lydia



**M** eet (Anula) Lydia, an electronics and communications engineer by accident, but a natural when it comes to language. Her editorial talent is the reason behind her 18-year long association with Newgen.

She loves most everything about Chennai, but it's a surprise to even die-hard fans of the city that she includes the scorching temperatures on that list: "I love the heat (I know it's weird! People roll their eyes when I say this); the outwardly suspicious but very hospitable people; old buildings, churches, and temples; beaches; parks and trees. More importantly, Chennai is such a wonderful place that regardless of where you are on the economic pay scale, there is always a place for you in Chennai." She does hate the traffic, pollution, and littering.

The one superpower that Lydia wishes for is, without a doubt, time travel. She says that it would be an awesome experience to travel back in time to see how people lived before all the fancy gadgets and the technology. If her life were to be made into a movie she would cast Kerry Washington to play her (Washington plays Olivia Pope, a crisis manager, in the TV series *Scandal*).

Lydia's happiest memory began as a sad one when she and her younger sister got separated on their way back from school. "My sister was in class II at the time and I was in class V. She got into the wrong bus and before I could pull her out, the bus took off. I ran after the bus for two bus stops and found her. Passers-by found us standing by the side of the road hugging, with tears of joy streaming down our faces." Seeing the humorous side of any situation, even when she's down or in trouble is her most favorite thing about herself. Her least favorite thing is that she worries too much and sometimes loses sleep over things that never even come to pass. Bad road etiquette always sets her teeth on edge. Her pet peeves are people who honk incessantly on the road even when the traffic is moving and people who don't give way to children.

The three things that her colleagues at Newgen don't know about her are: "I'm an excellent driver; a huge movie and theater buff; and my deepest darkest secret is that I'm addicted to coffee. For several years, coffeehouses were my place of worship, and I truly believed baristas were doing god's work."

*Continued on page 37*



Spotlight on

## Srikanth

Meet Srikanth, a warm and compassionate mentor with a wealth of experience in the publishing field. Having worked closely with almost every publisher in Newgen, particularly Oxford University Press, he has now ventured into new avenues of technology. His initiatives have brought in many technological changes to improve the overall efficiency and quality of the services provided by Newgen. The people he has mentored and the processes that he has developed over the years are the things that make him proud.



Even after living for so many years in Chennai, he still hates the heat; however, he loves the multi-cultural exposure that the city provides. The coolest thing that he is working on now is PubKit, a workflow management system specially designed for journals. Srikanth claims Eliyahu Moshe Goldratt, the well-known Israeli business management guru, as his inspiration since 1991.

The one superpower that Srikanth wishes to have is the evergreen concept of 'time travel'. His sense of humour comes through when he says his irrational fear is that his children would start listening to him. He speaks like a true father when he says that his happiest memory is the day his daughter was born. According to him, his tendency to give space to others is the most and least favourite quality about himself. His pet peeves are tardiness and people talking aloud when they know his hearing and listening capabilities are perfectly fine.

His interest in palmistry is his secret talent though he stopped practicing it when he got addicted to it. If ever a movie was made of his life, he would like George Clooney to play him. Those who know him will find it hard to believe when he says he was a sportsman and the most short-tempered person in his youth. During his school days he was the captain of the cricket and soccer teams.

The top three things on his bucket list are: A tour covering all of Europe with his family; learning to drive; and visiting the Toyota factory in Japan. Movies and music are his relief mechanisms, and he enjoys watching Hollywood action and comedy films. His observation about women's place in today's society is, in his own words: "The reason we keep hearing this question in various forums indicates that we still have a long way to go."







# நெகிழி தவிர்ப்போம்\*



Dipak is a project manager  
in the OUP UK Law team.

தற்கால  
அகழ்வாராய்ச்சியில் நமக்கு  
கிடைப்பது முதுமக்கள்  
தாழி!

வருங்கால  
அகழ்வாராய்ச்சியில்  
நமக்கு கிடைக்கபோவது  
நெகிழி!

மனித சமுதாயமே இன்றே  
நீ விழி!

அதன் பயன்பாட்டை  
விட்டொழி!

அதற்கு முதலில்  
போடுவோம் பிள்ளையார்  
சுழி!

அதுவே நம் அனைவரின்  
உறுதிமொழி!

\* The poem talks about recent archaeological excavations that have unearthed urns used centuries ago. Our future generations, however, will excavate only plastics if we don't put a stop to it now. Let this be our pledge!



# Small Steps Towards Big Changes



Vijee is the project management lead for Wolters Kluwer Tax & Accounting Books team.

.....

If you improve by 1% a day, in 70 days you're twice as good. ~ Alan Weiss

Every time I see the email asking to contribute an article for *Reflections*, my mind would rush with likely topics I could write on for the company magazine. But then the mundane tasks for the day would take over the creative assignment. This article was tagged in my to-do list and didn't see the light of day until I saw a YouTube video and applied its teaching in action. Here I am with an article inspired by a video summary of the book *One Small Step Can Change Your Life: The Kaizen Way* by Robert Maurer.

I am sure you have heard the term *kaizen* at one time or another. To rekindle your grey matter, it is the Japanese practice of taking small steps to continuously improve a process or product. The video explained that this concept could be used effectively in day-to-day life to transform ourselves.

The video goes like this—one day author Robert Maurer saw an ad for a Lexus automobile detailing numerous quality awards it won over the past decade. This got him thinking about how the car manufacturer was able to produce such high quality products so consistently. To find the answer, Maurer had to go back to the late 1940s to find that an American named W. Edwards Deming came to Japan to help rebuild their manufacturing facilities. Deming was largely responsible for the improvements in American manufacturing during World War II and the Japanese were eager to hear what he had to say. Deming told Japanese factory workers that if they wanted to produce great products they had to ask themselves every day what extremely small step they could take to improve the process or product. The Japanese bought into Deming's philosophy and named it *kaizen*. Through the application of *kaizen*, Japan rose from the rubble of World War II and became a manufacturing superpower by the end of the twentieth century.





Robert Maurer, a clinical psychologist at UCLA, wondered if kaizen could be as effective in transforming people's lives as it had been in transforming an industry. To test his hypothesis, he started asking his patients to take embarrassingly small steps towards a significant change they wanted to make. Instead of encouraging a patient to leave an unsatisfying career, he got them to spend a few seconds imagining the details of a dream job. Instead of telling a patient to go to the gym and exercise for thirty minutes, he asked her to march in front of the TV during a commercial for one minute. If a patient wanted to cut out caffeine from his diet, he had him reduce his intake by one sip a day. His patients couldn't find excuses to not take these steps because they required hardly any effort at all. Over time these small steps led to shockingly big changes. His patients were in careers they loved, they exercised regularly and cut out addictive foods from their diet.

Maurer's prescription for small changes is the exact opposite of what we hear from so many motivational YouTube videos and speakers. Many inspirational talks proclaim that if we want to achieve great things we have to take big bold steps. But taking big bold steps often backfires because although they may seem exciting in the moment that excitement quickly wears off and we are just left with a fear of uncertainty or failure. If we drop out of college to start a business, we may quickly realise how much work it is to start a business. Fear, stress, and anxiety may set in and when our brains detect these emotions, a region called the amygdala activates our fight-or-flight response. When our fight-or-flight responses are activated, we stop thinking rationally about long-term goals and look for the quickest way to relieve feelings of stress, anxiety, and fear. Thousands





of years ago that meant running away from a tiger, but today it usually means distracting ourselves with comforting, coping activities. We can avoid the fear of people rejecting our next business product by procrastinating and endlessly checking Facebook or WhatsApp. We can avoid feeling self-conscious at the gym by curling up on the couch with a bowl of ice cream and watching TV.

So, why is kaizen such an effective strategy for change? When we take embarrassingly small steps towards a goal we tip-toe past the amygdala's fear of detection and avoid activating our fight-or-flight response. This removes the urge to distract ourselves and allows us to take action without the fear of failure. The more action we take, the quicker we lay the foundation for new positive habits. Maurer says that with kaizen your resistance to change weakens. Where once you may have been daunted by change, your new mental software could have you moving towards your ultimate goal at a pace that may very well exceed your expectations.

If you would like to experience the extraordinary power of kaizen, here are two ordinary ways to get started. First, start by asking smaller questions. When Michael Ondaatje, award-winning author of *The English Patient*, wants to create a compelling character for a new book, he doesn't ask how he can create a fascinating character that readers will love. He simply thinks of a scene like a plane crash and asks himself a few small and specific questions. Who is the man in the plane? Why is he there? Why does he crash? These questions are small and playful and the mind has fun coming up with the answers.

A second way to start adopting a kaizen mindset is to focus on smaller rewards. In his book Maurer talks about a businessman named Jack Stubb who had severe rheumatoid arthritis and was hospitalized with over 20 swollen joints. His doctors advised him to avoid exercise at all times but Jack was stubborn and took small steps by giving himself



small rewards along the way. Every morning he told himself that all he had to do was get out of bed. After he got out of bed and stood upright he would give himself a short and sincere compliment like “atta boy Jack.” Then he’d walk down the street to the gym and focus on the reward of having an enjoyable conversation with the staff. Once he got on the treadmill Jack walked for just two minutes and then rewarded himself with more praise and encouragement. By the time Robert Maurer met him, Jack was in his 70s and had won the Mr. World bodybuilding contest for his age division.

By asking small questions and using small rewards that might seem silly in the moment, you are actually implementing a brilliant strategy to achieve large goals. That was the core message from *One Small Step Can Change Your Life*, but the author provides many more kaizen strategies that you can adopt. You can find Maurer’s video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHkOFs67d9A>. Another interesting video is “Kaizen Up” at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B195X\\_5MMkk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B195X_5MMkk). To achieve an audacious goal, simply focus on the smallest step you can take to make progress. While the steps you take may be small, the change you’ll experience won’t be.

## OUP Offsite



Vignesh is a senior project manager in the OUP UK Law team.

Oxford University Press (OUP) visits are standard client-supplier meetings, but the introduction of the annual offsite programme in 2016 was a game changer. This event is not strictly confined to business talk among top office bearers of Newgen and OUP, but it is a chance for the Newgen project managers (PMs) to do the talking. A highlight of the OUP offsite session is that it is not only interactive, but informative where OUP and Newgen senior managers get to see the business relationship from the perspective of PMs who carry out the day-to-day business of publishing.

The 2019 Newgen-OUP offsite took place on March 28 at the Holiday Inn Chennai. While Deborah Shor and Don McConnell from OUP have visited the Newgen offices many times over the years, this was Don’s first time to the offsite. Deb has been a key





part of the offsite since its inception. This year the day started with a managers' meeting in the morning. This was a roundtable meeting for the junior managers—the supervisors and team leaders—to speak directly to the client. The larger session with all the PMs took place in the afternoon.

The session began with a presentation from Micky Joseph who explained about the Newgen Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. There are four initiatives supported by Newgen, but Micky focused this presentation on the Nandavanam Center of Excellence for Children with Developmental Challenges. This programme offers educational and day care services for children with developmental challenges like autism and cerebral palsy. Newgen's CSR program also oversees a beach cleaning programme and other eco-friendly activities. Staff who are interested in volunteering can contact Micky Joseph ([mickyjoseph@newgen.co](mailto:mickyjoseph@newgen.co)) for more details.

Afrose, a UK Law PM, set the tone for the rest of session with her warm and funny remarks on how much she appreciated the mentorship of her manager, Raji (UK Law team leader). Deb and Don were amused by the way Afrose delivered her impromptu speech. It was a heartfelt and enthusiastic endorsement from a PM who was just starting her career in publishing and still new to the OUP account. The entire audience was taken by her story of how she was encouraged to be “bold” and “brave” in her job.

Raji Sen, another PM from the UK Law team, shared her views on how she overcame the challenges when she received a negative feedback from OUP. She had worked with OUP Journals earlier and was asked to compare the OUP Books and Journals processes. She described journals as moving a “thousand little stones” compared to books as





moving a “whole mountain.” The audience acknowledged her observation with a huge round of applause.

I also took a chance to offer my own perspective on the performance of the UK Law team from the point of view of different stakeholders and raised concerns I’ve had around freelancer management. I also asked some questions about Brexit and its implications on the production process of UK Law books that I’ve been managing.

Chitra, who manages the Newgen Editorial Services team, introduced her manuscript preparation and pilot teams. It was exciting to hear such kind words of appreciation spoken about our colleagues. The audience was awestruck by Chitra’s exhilarating speech and were moved by her adoration for her staff.

Deb then requested the PMs to share the positive feedback they’ve received from the authors and stories of any interesting experiences they’ve had during the production process. Mohith from the UK Law team shared that a cherished experience for him was when one of his authors appreciated his work so much and sent him an invitation to the book celebration. Tharani, from US Academic, shared that an author mailed an autographed copy of the book to her in India. The personal note conveying appreciation for her work and best wishes were part of this treasured surprise.

Several other US Academic PMs shared the excellent author feedbacks they’d received. Christina shared her pleasant experience of finding out that an author had tagged her in social media. The author had thanked Christina for her relentless support and excellent professionalism during the production process in a Facebook post.



Ashish, also from US Academic, described an interesting scenario. There were a lot of challenges during the earlier stages of a particular book, but Ashish managed the author's expectations well and built a good rapport. The author even read through Ashish's personal travel blog and invited him for a trekking tour. This is one of the mind-blowing stories which electrified the audience and the applause lasted for nearly two minutes!

Srividhya, from UK Medicine, mentioned that she successfully completed the production of a book where she had managed 700 contributors. This Herculean effort garnered her a standing ovation from the whole room! Deb spoke with appreciation on the perseverance and professionalism of Srividhya's efforts and acknowledged her manager, Sathya, for his support and successful mentoring of his PMs to handle complicated projects.

The session became extremely interactive when Anthuvan from the UK Law team raised a brainstorming question. Author or workflow—which of these two is OUP's priority? This lit up the discussion that lasted for nearly half an hour with Maran engaging directly with Anthuvan and the whole audience on how to deal with issues like this. Anthuvan raised this question because she had faced a very sensitive situation where the author was giving corrections even during the final day of the production process.

Deb extended her support to Anthuvan and noted some tremendous points for her to consider in this situation. Deb also addressed points raised by Dipak from the UK Law team about sensitive situations on the opposite end of the production process—how to address miscommunications and misbriefings at handover when they come from OUP.

The session concluded with a high tea and the PMs were able to get refreshments and engage in individual conversations with Deb and Don. Not to mention the groupie and selfie sessions with Deb and Don! In my opinion, it was a wonderful platform for PMs to interact with the client. I am sure all the PMs will be cherishing this experience for a long time while eagerly awaiting the 2020 offsite.

A background image showing a dense, swirling mass of blue plastic bags, creating a tunnel-like effect.

Does anyone else have plastic bags full of plastic bags,  
or is it just me?  
~ Anon.



# Queen of the Hills



Tharani Ramachandran is a senior production editor with the OUP team.

.....

Certainly, travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living ~ Mary Ritter Beard

**W**e all travel for a reason, and experiencing new places is a way to guarantee an adventure. What do you do though when you're just going on an outing to the same places you've been to your whole life? This is when having great company and seeing things afresh through their eyes becomes the most interesting part of the journey.





Diem called up one day and said that she wanted to visit my hometown. I was thrilled that she wanted to see Coimbatore, and on March 8, 2019, she arrived on the 5.30 am sleeper train with Xuan, her 7-year-old daughter. It was Women's Day and we decided to celebrate "our" special time to the fullest.

We started our day with a walk around the Race Course, a popular place in Coimbatore where people from all walks of life join together for healthy strolls and jogs. However, it's difficult to shed any weight as the whole area is surrounded by restaurants of various kinds. Diem spotted a sign for Va Pho and was excited to introduce me to Vietnamese noodle soup. Unfortunately, when we came back for lunch, we discovered that the restaurant was closed for maintenance. However, we have plans to go to the location in Chennai when I'm back at the office.

The same day we took a long drive to visit the famous Isha Yoga Center situated at the foothills of the Velliangiri Mountains, the "Kailash of the South." The center and the famous Adi Yogi Statue and Devi Temple offer a picturesque view. The foothills of







the mountain draw your attention with a serenity. You could only love this place more if you're a spiritual monk in the making. It was almost dusk when we decided to leave. Rather than going straight home we drove down the foothills hoping to see some wild-life but we were out of luck and missed the elephants. The evenings though are a pleasant time in Coimbatore, and you can count on a chilly gentle breeze flowing around the forest areas. Diem loved the cool fresh air and we decided to stop for a cup of tea. The day wound down with home-cooked dinner, making plans for the following day, and a good night's sleep.

Mornings are usually slow at my house, but not when you are filled with thoughts of travel. We got up early and packed our bags for the long drive up the hills to Ooty. The four of us (Diem, Xuan, and my sister, Vidhya, and I) started around 8.30 am. As someone who has traveled this particular journey her whole life, it was sad to see that most of the trees had been cut down to expand the roads. Just 5 years ago, the drive from Coimbatore to Mettupalayam and then on to Ooty felt completely different. It is now a dry drive toward Mettupalayam.

It takes a skilled driver to be up to the task of maneuvering the hills around Ooty with so many vehicles, and animal traffic up and down the winding road that includes 14 hairpin bends. The area around Coonoor is lush. It gives you a sense of how big nature is and what it provides for us. It gives you peace of mind along with fresh air that sends a tingling chill down your spine. It's a different world than the big cities we left behind.

We reached Ooty around 11 am and the sun was intense, but the air was cool since we were high up in the hills. Our first stop of the day was the Rose Garden which is situated on a slope and divided into five different terraces. Diem and her daughter loved seeing the vibrant colors of the large collection of roses. They were so happy and amazed at





looking at the pretty flowers and the interesting names they were given. Flowers and their scents have the power to change your mood.

Our next stop was Doddabetta Peak, the highest point in the South. The trip was made even more fun when we were blessed with a drizzle. We became kids again running for cover from the rain and enjoying ice cream on the cool mountain top where it wouldn't melt as quickly. Then to warm up we laid our hands on whatever else the vendors were selling like hot roasted corn with lemon and hot spices. Diem and her daughter enjoyed the trip thoroughly and in the few years I have known them, I have never before seen so much excitement in their eyes.

We then went to a nearby Tea Factory & Museum. The aroma was uplifting and we were amazed to see the whole manufacturing process. We were rewarded with tasting a raw cup of tea, which in fact is the real way to drink tea. Then we visited the Chocolate Factory next door. This was when our Women's Day outing became a real Girls' Day outing. Young or old, one's love for chocolates never dies.

Even though we spent the morning seeing so many roses, it turned out we didn't get enough of it. We visited the Botanical Garden, and although it was not quite the time for blooming, we saw a great variety of flowers. We also walked barefoot on the cool grass and relaxed on the lawn. It was a sight to see so many families and groups playing and enjoying each other's company. Coming out of the Botanical Garden we did some shopping and then headed straight to our rooms to retire for the day.





Waking up the next morning in Ooty was not as exciting as the day before in Coimbatore. Instead of looking forward to a new adventure, we were all aware that today we would be leaving the hill station and then Diem and her daughter would be leaving us to go back to Chennai. We were all a little disheartened, but that's how life is. We got ready and had a breakfast of hot idlys and dosas. After breakfast we headed to the boathouse to have a fun ride on the lake. Then we headed to 6th Mile, which is a familiar sight in many movies you may have seen. The dense pine tree coverage and steep slopes surrounded by bodies of water is awe-inspiring.

The day was almost coming to an end by the time we got to Pykara Falls. Here we clicked so many pictures that we all have pictures of each other taking photographs with our mobiles. As the day was coming to a close we could all sense a change in our moods. It was a feeling of



**I can even choose my gender, I can't choose to be plastic-free when I go shopping.  
~ Frederikke Magnussen**





"Oh, is it over?" But all good things come to an end. Then came a moment when I saw Diem's face light up. Her favorite online wool shop had an outlet in Ooty. We thought Diem was kidding when she pulled out a large cloth bag and said she was going to fill it up with yarn, but she was true to her word. We left Ooty and reached Coimbatore by 9 pm.



The best part about this trip was that it was an all-female outing. Our Women's Day would not have been complete without Diem and her daughter. My family and I were so excited to meet them and while it was a short trip it was a particularly memorable one. The journey itself, while familiar for my sister and I, was as much a learning experience for us as it was for Diem and Xuan. It is amazing what travel can do to a person even when it is along the same road you've traveled your entire life. Introducing Diem and

Xuan to our family and our hometown and seeing our daily lives through their eyes offered new perspectives. And we got to witness the essence of their mother-daughter relationship. When you are with a young girl who watches closely what it is like for women to be friends and be supportive and have fun together, it is akin to leading by example for the next generation to learn about the value of human relationships and what travel can do for your worldview and your well-being.



**The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.**

**~ Robert Swan**



## Spotlight on Lydia (*contd. from page 20*)

Travel features prominently on Lydia's bucket list. She'd like to see the Mayan ruins of Coba in Mexico and the Incan ruins of Machu Picchu in Peru. She would like to stay at a quaint countryside cottage in a beautiful village in the UK and visit the village tea shop and pubs. She would also like to plan an African safari, see the Amazon rainforest, and so on. Aside from travel, she wants to start and run a small business, get a tattoo, and live on a farm.

She is a loving aunt to her adorable nieces, Erin and Sandra. Her proudest moment in her own words: "When my nieces were babies and still drinking milk out of bottles, I taught them to bump their feeding bottles together and say, Cheers!" Her nieces keep her recharged, grounded, and constantly on her feet. She spends every minute she can steal away with them doing gardening, riding bicycles, or playing with them. She feels she is their substitute parent, confidante, and playmate.



Lydia is passionate about women's role in society. Even though things are changing now more than ever before, she laments that the changes are not happening fast enough. In her own words: "Getting hitched to a 'well-to-do' boy, becoming mothers, and setting up a home are still the lofty goals that many women aspire to. And the saddest thing is that women are brought up to think that that is enough. Women will have a true place in this society when we stop hiding our womenfolk in girls-only schools and colleges. When we stop having a ladies' section in public transportation. When we teach our girls how to manage their own finances. When we begin telling them that they can be anything they want. When we teach our girls to dress the way they want without fear of being shamed or chastened. When we encourage our girls to speak up for themselves. In recent times, we may have swapped our rusty cage for a golden one. But men and women's traditional roles have not changed much and we continue to bring up our girls conservatively. We teach them how to be good wives and great mothers. We celebrate Women's Day every year thinking we've done it all and that we can have it all, when what we have at best is a toehold in society. The cage may be a gilded one, but we're well and truly behind bars. And what's more upsetting is the fact that we think that's where we deserve to be."



# முதியோர் இல்லம்\*



Arockia Alexander heads the Centralized Books Pre-Editing team.



என் பிறவிக் கடனைத்  
தீர்க்கும் வழியறியேன் - ஆயினும்  
என்னைப் பிறப்பித்தக் கடனைத்  
தீர்க்கும் வழியறிவேன்!

ஓடியாடி உழைத்தப் பின்னே  
சற்றே அயர்ந்துப்போனீர் - ஆயினும்  
தேடித்தேடி சேர்த்த அனுபவத்தால்  
முற்றும் உயர்ந்துப்போனீர்!

\* A Tamil poem about how old people are getting increasingly abandoned and the need to look inwardly at ourselves and take a pledge to treat them with compassion.



கிழவன் கிழத்தியென யாரேனும்  
அழைத்தால் சினம் கொள்ளாதீர் - ஏனெனில்  
அழகுத்தமிழில் தலைவன் தலைவியென  
பொருளுண்டு என்பதை மறவாதீர்!

மீண்டும் மழலைகள் பேசும்  
குழந்தைகள் நீங்கள்! - ஆம்  
மீண்டும் வேண்டும் என்ற  
குழந்தைகள் நீங்கள்!

ஊரெல்லாம் சொத்தைச் சேர்த்தோம்  
உண்மையானச் சொத்தை அறியாமலே!  
யாரெல்லாம் அந்தச் சொத்து என்பதனை  
திண்மையாய் நமக்குச் சொல்லாமலே!

என்கடன் பணிசெய்து கிடப்பதே என்று  
அப்பர் சொன்னதை அப்பனுக்கு - வாங்கிய  
என்கடனுக்காய் செய்யாது போனோம்  
மூப்பரே முதலில் மன்னிப்பீர்!

'முதுமை' பிணி என்பர் சிலர்  
எனக்கு அப்படித் தோன்றுவதில்லை  
முதுமைப் பிணி என்பேன் நான் - ஆம்  
நமக்கு வழிகாட்டுவதுதானே அந்தப்பணி!

எனக்கும் இப்படித்தானே நடக்கும் என்ற  
நினைப்பு இருக்குமேயானால் தவிப்பே இருக்காது!  
கணக்கும் இதயம் இருக்குமேயானால்  
இணைந்து இருப்பதில் சுமை தெரியாது!

மூச்சு வாங்க பின்னே ஓடிய  
பெற்றவர்களை நினைவில் நிறுத்தினால் - பின்னர்  
பேச்சு வாங்க என்ன அவசியம்  
ஏற்றுக்கொள்வாரோ இதைச் சொன்னால்!

திரைகடல் ஓடியும் திரவியம் தேடுவாய்  
நரைவியுந்த திரவியம் தேடுதே உன்னை!  
வாழ்ந்தவர் சொல்வாரெனில் அர்த்தம் இருக்கும்  
தாழ்ந்தவர் ஆகிடாது பெருமையாய் காப்போம்!

முன்பதிவு செய்து கடவுளைத் தரிசிக்கிறோம்  
முன்றிற்கும் கடவுளை ஏனோ மறந்தோம்!  
அவர்களின் தியாகத்தில் ஆயிரத்தில் ஒருமடங்கு - நாம்  
அவர்களுக்காக செய்தால் இவ்வில்லங்களுக்கு இனி தேவையிருக்காது!

# Kalam's Book of Records



Jayakumar V. S. is a senior executive in Graphic Design.



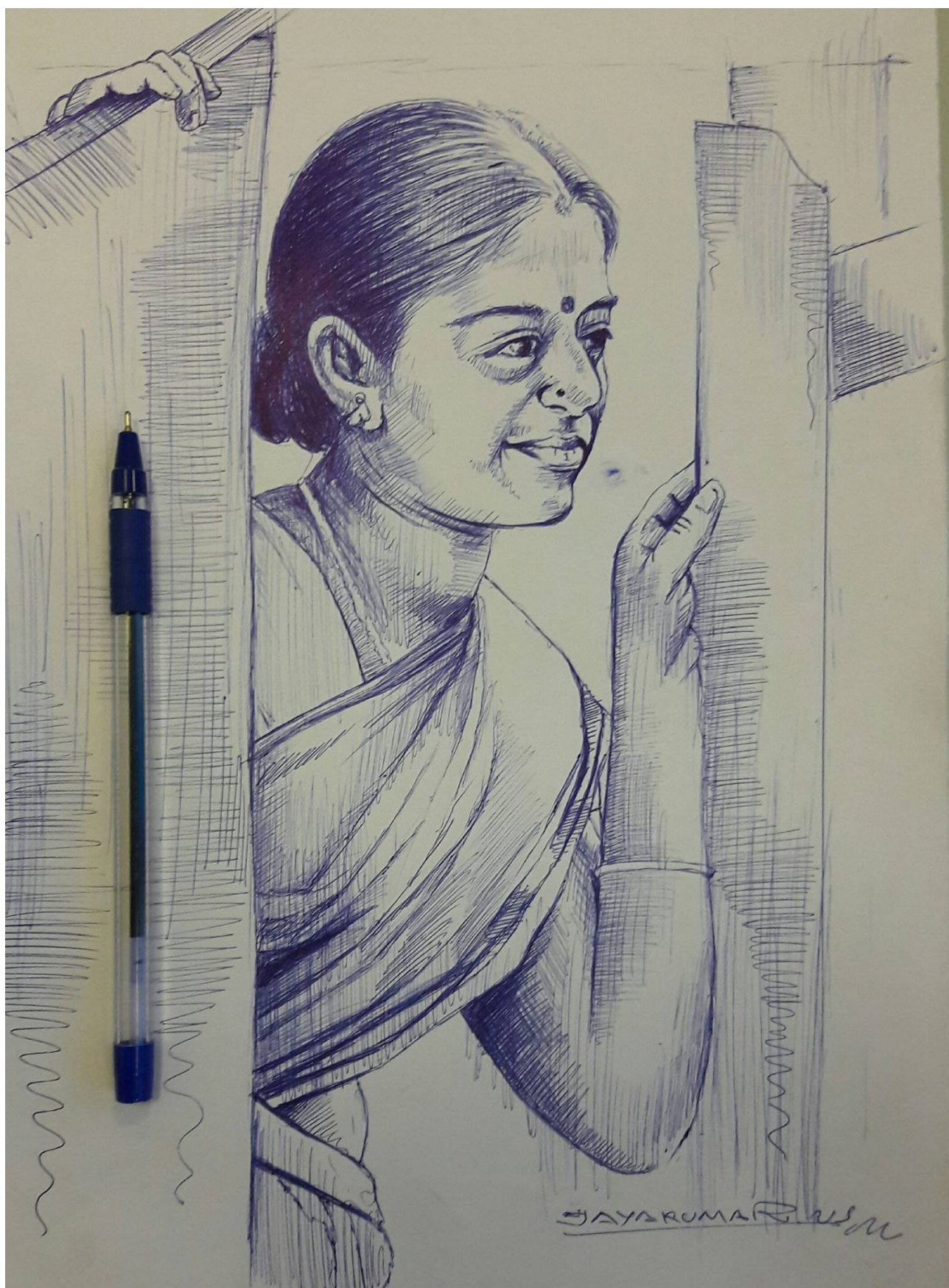
Started with the main aim of unearthing talents from every corner, Kalam's Book of Records documents the unique talents of individuals or groups from different countries and thereby sets a benchmark for achievements and accomplishments.

To all the people out there with a talent to showcase and needing a sense of achievement, Kalam's book of records is here to motivate and help you achieve this.

In collaboration with various leading global brands and companies, they create record-breaking cam-

paigns to engage the audience with unforgettable moments of absolute happiness and wonder.

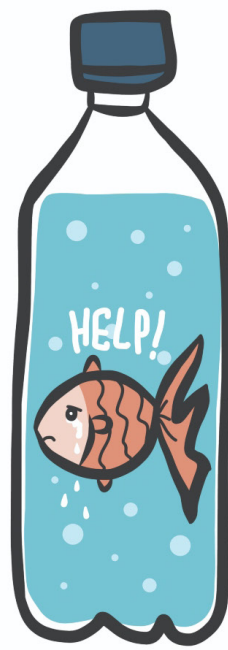




*Waiting...*

Sketch by Jayakumar V. S.





SAY  
**NO**  
TO  
**PLASTIC**