



Daddy's Enduring Script

Seated in our drawing room, Daddy quietly wrote into the night, the green ink from his fountain pen turning thoughts into words in his beautiful handwriting. My mother and little sister would be fast asleep in the bedroom. But I sat huddled in a blanket on the cane chair opposite his desk and watched. It was the 1960s. We lived in Chennai, in a smiling modest house with whitewashed walls and green windows, a big garden around it and an inviting porch. To help make ends meet, my parents had rented out half the house.

Daddy was a freelance writer contributing short stories to Tamil magazines and scripts for films, although the film offers were few and far between. Before I was born, he'd once held a steady, well-paying job in Trivandrum as Malayalam news reader, his name Nagarcoil K. Padmanabhan known to All India Radio listeners in Kerala. He'd suddenly resigned from AIR to pursue with relentless passion his dream of being a writer. Among Daddy's early friends in Chennai were actors Gemini Ganesan and Nagesh, the comedian. Ganesan continued to visit us even after he became famous. I would look out, star-struck, as his blue fiat drove in. He'd tease my handsome dad; calling him "*Maapilai*" [Tamil for bridegroom] and the two would go on talking shop.

One thing Daddy had gained early from his writing was Mummy. An English literature graduate and avid reader, she was a fan of Daddy's magazine stories. The two became pen pals, met and got married, although the doe-eyed beauty from Bangalore was no Brahmin like daddy. It was a huge leap of faith to marry inter-caste in those days.

As I sat there watching Daddy, I wondered what he would write every day. I knew how he always worked on his next story at night, even as he was working on his current one at the film studios. "My big hit is just a script away," he would smile, his deep dimples showing.

"Aren't you sleepy?"

"No," I'd mumble, although I'd often doze off in the chair and he'd carry me to bed next to Mum. I would dream of reams of white paper filled with green writing, and of valiant heroes – good always triumphed over evil, and Dad's heroes were always good.

When I was ten, he gave me Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, a rather new book then. Just one story like that is enough for a lifetime," he said. I sensed the longing

in him. He had had a body of work by then, but a big hit eluded him. The novel made a great impact on me, and how right daddy was. Harper Lee never wrote another novel, yet became a legend with her only book.

Summer nights, Daddy would regale us with tales about the film shoots. He was a good mimic with his radio star's voice and was an excellent actor himself. And I would sigh—What a wonderful thing it is to be a writer!

On Sundays and holidays, I would go up to the attic, where I hid my journal, and write endless stories of my own. When Daddy wrote scripts for Telugu producers, they would be in English. Sometimes he would ask me for a particular English word, which I'd supply. My heart would swell with pride that I was a part of his writing. My sister Anuradha and I studied at Chennai's *Holy Angels' Convent*, a most exclusive school, which my father could ill afford. Still, he wanted us to study and speak English well; an "entitlement," he'd say.

Then, one day, I heard my parents whisper excitedly of a lucrative offer that had come to Daddy for a Telugu film. At last, we would be rich! And Mom had promised me a red frock, some stationery and a new doll.

There was an air of suppressed excitement in the house, of dreams that were finally coming true. I had a school picnic to go on early one morning. The evening before, Daddy had come home tired from work but took me out to buy snacks and sweets for the picnic. My basket was crammed with goodies. I was bursting with joy. Daddy set the alarm for five in the morning, ironed my clothes for the next day, and went to bed.

The next morning, the alarm clock went off. I got up but Daddy did not. He passed away in his sleep—a coronary thrombosis, the doctor explained. I was 13, my sister Anuradha, eight. Daddy was just 41.

Along with his body, our dreams too went up in flames. But *Nindu Hrudayalu*, the Telugu movie he had scripted with superstar N.T. Rama Rao in the lead, had celebrated its 100th day. The producer sent some additional money to my mother for the Hindi distribution rights of the film. The movie was a blockbuster, and the first in its genre. Daddy's script became a recurring Bollywood theme; three brothers separated in childhood, reunited as adults... avenging their parents' misfortunes.

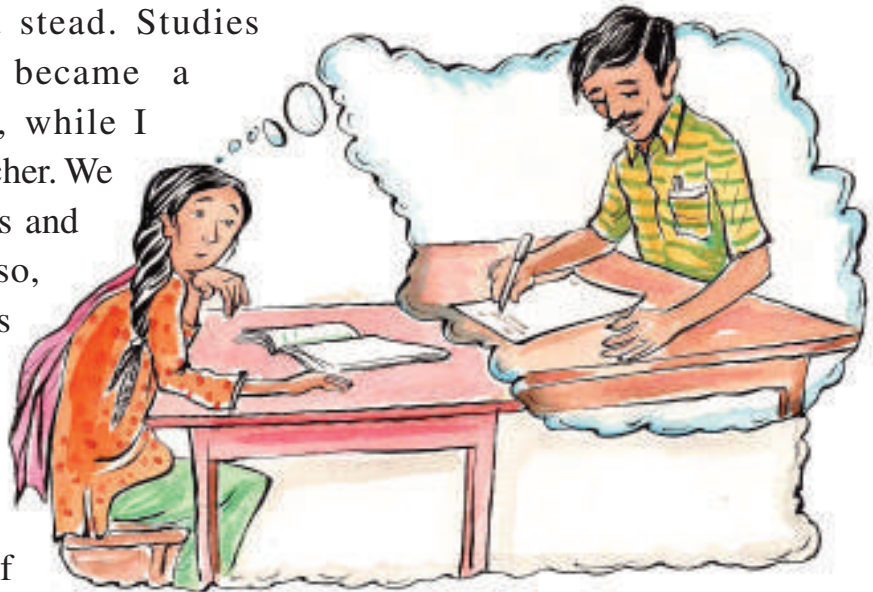
Another Telugu producer had visited us to offer his condolences. He remarked ruefully that my father's script for him was left half done. "I know the story," I told him, "I could finish it for you." He looked at me with kind eyes. "Are you sure?"

I nodded. "Daddy discussed the treatment with me." He smiled at my use of jargon. I completed the script for him. My mother, who'd been a teacher before her marriage,



went back to support the family. We left our beloved home and city, moving to my mother's ancestral home in Bangalore.

Then, as the years rolled by, life meandered in different directions for Anuradha and me. But our love for language and the written word stood us in good stead. Studies completed, Anuradha became a marketing professional, while I became a mathematics teacher. We soon had our own families and children to raise. Even so, Daddy's unfinished dreams lingered on. Both Anuradha and I continued to write. I brought out a collection of my poems, while my sister published her anthology of short stories and a novel.



In 2003, my entry, *For a Horseshoe Nail*, in the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association's short story competition won a highly commended prize. "Selected from 3700 stories, the competition was tough," the judges informed me. "Your story was beautifully told, and very well-written." Centered on an organ donation racket, it was set in a remote Tamil Nadu village, but read across the world. A UK doctor used the story as a topic for debate among his university students. The following year, it was Anuradha's turn. She too won a highly commended prize for her story. Today my elder daughter, Darshana Ramdev, is a journalist with the *Deccan Chronicle*. She always wanted to write. My younger one, Deeksha studying computer science, is also an ardent writer and has an active cricket blog, *The Tea-Towel Explanation*. "I am going to be a cricket writer, one day." She says as if it were a warning. "Let me finish my engineering."

Daddy passed away in 1970. Two generations ago, I'd say. But his single minded devotion to writing still glows like a beacon among his children and grandchildren.

Anybody can die. Yet, as I finish one more piece—this story you've read—I know something for sure about Dad. His writing never stopped.

Amara Bavani Dev

About the author



Amara Bavani Dev teaches high school mathematics at Good Shepherd Convent, Bengaluru. In 2003 she won Highly Commended Prize for her entry '*For a Horseshoe Nail*' in the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association's short story competition.

Meanings in context

freelance	:	self employed and hired to work for different companies
pursue	:	continue with
elude	:	escape from
regale	:	entertain with conversation
mimic	:	imitate in order to entertain or ridicule
attic	:	a space or room inside or partly inside the roof of a building
exclusive	:	high-class and expensive
blockbuster	:	a book or film that is very successful
treatment	:	the presentation of a subject
beacon	:	a light or fire on the top of a hill that acts as a signal

Comprehension

I. Complete the following sentences with the correct options.

- Daddy was _____ before pursuing his freelance writing.
 - an actor
 - a mimicry artist
 - a newsreader in AIR
 - an editor
- The writer was able to complete the half-done script of her father because
 - she had been a good writer at that time.
 - she had a copy of rough sketch of the script
 - her father had discussed the presentation of the script with her.
 - her mother had given her the copy of the script.

II. Answer the following questions.

1. What was the name of the narrator's father?
2. What was the economic condition of the narrator's family?
3. Daddy was a very caring father. Find out the sentences from the text in support of your answer.
4. "I know something for sure about Dad. His writings never stopped." Why did the daughter say this?
5. The writer talks about each of the following: (Give a description of each of the following.)
 - i) Her family:
 - a) Mother _____
 - b) Father _____
 - c) Self _____
 - d) Sister _____
 - ii) The conditions in the family:
 - a) Home _____
 - b) Life Style _____
 - c) Passion _____

Vocabulary

I. (i) Fill in the blanks with the words given below to make the passage meaningful.

mimic freelance treatment passion exclusive



Raghav, who was a _____ writer went up to the attic with his daughter to sit and discuss the _____ of the newly written script for a Hindi movie. He had a great _____ for acting. He used to regale his daughter with tales about the film shoots. He told her how once a big hit eluded him. The daughter, who was studying in an _____ school, was also a very good _____ and used to entertain her friends with her mimicry.

(ii) **Read the following sentences.**

1. Anuradha became a marketing professional.
2. She won a highly commended prize.

The underline words are used as adjectives

Read the lesson carefully and find out the nouns/phrases in the passage that take the adjectives given below.

- a. _____ thoughts b. _____ passion
c. _____ dreams d. _____ cricket blog
e. _____ beauty

(iii) **Notice the word in bold in this sentence.**

My big hit is just a **script** away.

The word **script** in this sentence **means** the words of a film, play, broadcast or speech, while ‘script’ in a language means the letters of an alphabet.

Now match the words in box with their related expressions given below. Write the correct numbers in the brackets.

Read the lesson carefully while you do this exercise.

- | |
|--|
| 1. script 2. big hit 3. current 4. swell 5. ill afford 6. treatment 7. fan, 8. leap of faith |
|--|
- arrange with difficulty (), feel proud (), processing or considering something ()
letters of an alphabet (), admirer (), sudden power (), success (), recent work ()

(iv) **Look at the underlined words:**

“Aren’t you sleepy?”; “No,” I’d mumble.....

And I would sigh-What a wonderful thing it is to be a writer!

In formal written styles reporting verb often indicates the characteristics of the way something was said. (eg.: whether it was shouted or whispered) or something about the emotional state of the original speaker (eg.: that they were happy, sad or excited.) Some such words are

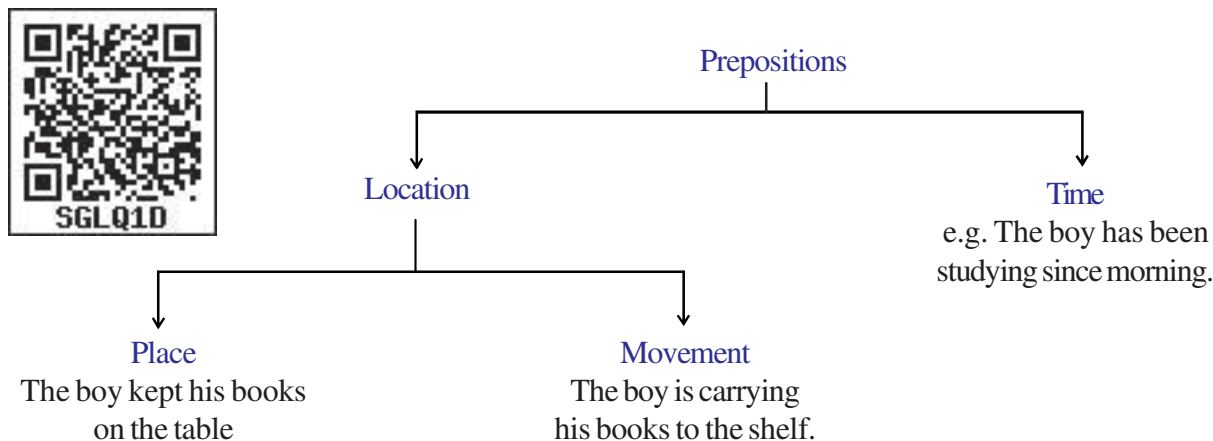
murmur whisper scream yell stammer sigh shriek mutter

Find out the meanings of these words written above from the dictionary and match them to the situations given below:

anger fear in a crowd hide from others in sadness in complaint
in hesitation in excitement

Grammar

A. Look at the following diagram.



B. Prepositions of time

Read the following.

1. Ravi usually gets up at 7 o'clock.
2. The train will leave in 5 minutes.
3. I have lived in this city for ten years.
4. We watch TV from 7 to 8 pm.
5. It has been raining since 10 am.
6. My birthday falls on March 12.
7. Let's wait until it stops raining.
8. My younger sister fell asleep during the film.

We use :

'at' with time.

eg.: at 5 o'clock - at 11.45 - at midnight - at lunchtime

'in' for longer periods of time.

eg.: in April - in 1986 - in winter - in the 19th century - in the 1970s - in the morning(s)
/ in the afternoon(s) / in the evening(s)

'on' with dates and days.

eg.: on 12 March - on Friday(s) - on Friday morning(s)
 on Sunday afternoon(s) - on Saturday night(s)
 on Christmas Day (but at Christmas)

‘during + noun’ to say when something happens.

eg.: during the film - during our holiday - during the night

‘since + a starting point’ for a specific time.

eg.: since April - since 1992 - since 8 o' clock

‘from - to + beginning and end of a period’.

eg.: from 5am to 6pm

(i) Read the following paragraph. Then work in pairs and decide which of the underlined prepositions refer to a) place, b) movement or c) time.

The thief had been hiding in the old warehouse since the morning. He was tired and hungry. It was noon when he began to doze. Just then, a helicopter flew slowly over the building. Imagining it to be the police, he ran out in panic and jumped into the nearby well. He tried to cling to a crack in the bricks and decided to wait until it was dark.

(ii) Categorize the prepositions in the box below to indicate their use as prepositions of place (P), movement (M) or time (T). Each word may have more than one category.

behind	_____ (P)	in	_____ (P), (T)	before	_____
along	_____	on	_____	until	_____
since	_____	beside	_____	between	_____
for	_____	up	_____	round	_____
out of	_____	among	_____	during	_____
past	_____	at	_____	after	_____
in front of	_____	across	_____	under	_____
through	_____	from	_____	around	_____



We use ‘for + a period of time expressing duration’.

for six years, for a week

We use until/till to say how long a situation continues

1.Radha has pain in her leg and wants to consult a doctor. Her friend, Anita, has got a pamphlet with details about a doctor. Take a close look at the pamphlet given below. Complete the telephone conversation between Radha and Anita.

DINESH ORTHO CLINIC

Dr. Dinesh Dewangan
MCH (Ortho) England, MS (Ortho)

Available at

1. DINESH ORTHO CLINIC
NEAR, SABJI MANDI, JANIGIR
MONDAY, FRIDAY
10.00 AM TO 1.00 PM

2. DINESH ORTHO CLINIC
OPP. BUS STAND, RAIGARH
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, SATURDAY
6.00 PM TO 9.00 PM

Anita: Hello, Radha. How are you?

Radha: I have a bad pain in my leg.

Anita: You know, Radha, today I got a pamphlet along with the newspaper. It’s about one Dr Dewangan who is an orthopedic surgeon.

Radha: Oh! Good! Tell me about him. Where is his clinic? When will he be available?

Anita: Dr Dinesh Dewangan is available --Mondays-, Fridays---10 am---1pm
-----Dinesh Ortho Clinic, Janjgir.

Radha: But I won't be able to go to Janjgir.

Anita: Well , Dr. Dewangan is also available ----- Raigarh----Tuesdays
--Thursdays andSaturdays.

Radha: Is he available at Raigarh -----10 am ----1pm?
 Anita: No. At Raigarh, he is available-----6pm ----9pm.
 Radha: Would you please tell me the location of Dr Dewangan's clinic at Raigarh?
 Anita: Oh! Sure! It's opposite the bus stand.
 Radha: Thank you Anita.
 Anita: Welcome. Have a great day.

Fill in the blanks with appropriate prepositions of time.

1. My father has lived in this house thirty years.
2. Rajeshwari has been using this cycle 2014.
3. I have been studying morning.
4. Ravi bought this house thirty years
5. We stay in my Aunt's house a week every year.
6. My mother visited Dongargarh six years
7. I reach home 6 pm everyday.
- 8 I shall finish this work Thursday.
- 9 She will come back ten day from now.
10. We sleep 7 am Sundays.

Writing

You have to go on a school picnic the next day. Write a paragraph about the preparation you will make for the picnic.

Hints

- Set the alarm clock to get up early.
- Think about the food items you take.
- Think about what clothes you will wear.
- The play things you will carry.
- The way you will reach the school on time.



Project Work

Adolescents face several physical and emotional problems including sexual abuse. Are you aware of such problems? As you may have noticed, one of the major problems in adolescence is the danger of unsafe touch or bad touch.

Here is some information about sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse is not limited to any one group and happens in all socio-economic, racial, ethnic, gender and religious groups.

- About 15-20% adults report receiving some form of sexual abuse as kids.
- Till the age of 12, boys and girls are equally affected. After adolescence girls are more affected than boys.
- There is no definite way of identifying an abuser from looks alone. Many abusers are relatives from the family and respectable professions like doctors, priests, and teachers.
- Most parents do not talk to their children about sex abuse. They are uncomfortable about talking about sex and feel unable to handle questions that will be asked by kids.

Abusers can be

- Strangers
- Family members
- Friends
- Neighbours
- Someone the child knows and trusts.

Effects of Sexual abuse

- Guilt
- Loss of control
- Lowered self-esteem
- Emotional difficulties
- Disruptive behaviour
- Poor performance in school
- Depression
- Suicide attempts

Source : ‘Prevention of child abuse’ with reference to concept of ‘Child abuse Episode on SATYA MEVA JAYATE’ by Aamir Khan designed and conducted by Dr. Bhooshan Shukla, Child and Family Psychiatrist, Pune Maharashtra (www.nobadtouch.com)

Given below are some statements on child sexual abuse. Talk to ten children from classes 6-10 in your school and ask them whether they agree or disagree with the following statements.

Statements	No. of students	No. of students who agree	%	No. of students who disagree	%
1. Some children are sexually abused by older children.					
2. Most of the time children are sexually abused when they are alone and outside their home.					
3. Only girls are victims of sexual abuse.					
4. Children from reputable families are not victims of sexual abuse.					
5. Very few children are victims of sexual abuse.					
6. Only young children are victims of sexual abuse.					
7. In sexual abuse cases, the child him/herself is never responsible.					
8. Children who face sexual abuse do not trust anybody.					
9. Sexual abuse is generally committed by unknown people.					
10. Discussion on this issue is avoided by teachers and parents.					

Based on the responses that you get on this questionnaire, work out the percentage of children who agree/disagree with each of the above statements.

(Child Sex Abuse is a reality and we should know the basic safety rules for their protection like saying ‘No’ to bad touch or taking help from elders.)

