

Hakuna Matata - Life is Calling

By Nikhil Bagatikar, CA

THE

art of modern day writing is gathering momentum. It is refreshing to watch young writers picking up the newly cultivated genre of contemporary writing, which relates with today's youth and young Srinivas certainly attempts it through this thrilling venture with a clever blend of terror, love, and humor.

Set against backdrop of worst ever attack on Mumbai, Srinivas weaves in the love story of a young Chartered Accountant - Kaushik Akella, who is a happy-go-lucky person - whose funny SMSs and sense of humour makes him popular and loved by all. He has a perfect job, and has just met the love of his life – Anushka. However, things take a turn for the worse as Mumbai is shaken by the terror attacks on a very famous hotel.

Apart from the shock of Mumbai recovering from the reigns of terror, Kaushik is facing a far deeper shock of being an accomplice along with his valentine for these dastardly acts. Kaushik who is otherwise known as a carefree, witty individual has to maintain his poise and amongst all is also fighting a deeper enemy – his own mind which does not believe the evidence against his valentine.

The book starts with remarkable pace with a witty speech, a fun-filled induction programme, a soft love story and a terror attack. The plot is well-laced with the interesting proverbs as chapter names setting up the appetite, and the story is cleverly punctuated with whacky one-liners and SMS jokes at regular intervals.

The narrative has fine bits of knowledge of cards, money laundering, and polygraph tests with creative detailing. As the story twists towards the terror attack and fateful coincidences, the plot thickens. Srinivas embarks upon you though that in 21 st century the evil will be “virtually” faceless. However, in the war with a faceless enemy, Kaushik's atonement could have been handled with lot more intensity. Also, the crisp, racy beginning becomes more predictable towards end; the suspense could have been equally or more dramatic.

Hakuna Matata is a good beginning for young Srinivas given its scintillating amalgam of wit, creative detailing and thrill. In a time of contemporary writing, Hakuna Matata –which means, Don't Worry – Be Happy in Swahili captures the camaraderie amongst young professionals in corporate set up. But the real message hidden in title could have been given more overtly. With a clever toning down in the mature content, the book can have larger patronage with all ingredients of a Bollywood potboiler.

Chetan Bhagat has inspired many young writers for picking up the art of contemporary writing. Though rightly crediting Chetan Bhagat, young Srinivas Yanamandra has created his own space in the league of new Gen-Next writers. It is like a meticulously cooked food, Srinivas has a good story line and added the correct proportion of salt (suspense) to suit the tastes of all kind of eaters (readers). He has then stirred up the dish by adding the spice of humour and the richness of unique knowledge.

So go for Hakuna Matata – Life is calling!!! All in all, it's a relishing read, especially while you are traveling or when you want to productively use your 2-3 hours of leisure time.