

The South Asian Perspective(s): Desi & disabled*

Podcast Dissertation by: Dr. Grishma Shah

Caste Part 1• 40:04 mins

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

lower caste, india, caste, caste system, people, brahmins, reservation, hinduism, argued, folks, considered, categories, religion, bounding, community, case, friend, married, create, family

SPEAKERS

Grishma, Professor Chakravorthy, Madhubala, Dev, Rajnikant

(Suspenseful music fades in)

Madhubala 00:06

My dad's a Brahmin and my mom is a Patel, so it was a big deal for them to get married, because they were different castes. I know that a lot of times my dad's side of the family had that, you know, they were superior to my mom's side. We visited India quite a few times, and then they would come here. They would just talk about how they were, Brahmins were superior. And it really confused me, because when you look at people's standard of living, and like here, you know, we have people who are not caste, but lower class, middle class and upper class, their financial class status was lower. So that always kind of confused me. But it was more of that delineation that society had set upon them. They would say things about how they are more pure I think. I don't remember I was I was so young, but there was always a sense of we are higher. I'm half Brahmin, I'm half whatever, like I didn't understand as a child, like the differences of any of it. I just knew that it wasn't right.

(Suspenseful music fades out)

Dev 01:25

It's become very intricate now, hasn't it? Even within caste there are subcastes (chuckles). And there are different types, like, you know, it's just, it's amazing. It's amazing how many barriers our minds can put up within the span of a couple of 100

years, I'm not sure how long the caste system has been going on for, I'm just guessing here. And it's and it's amazing how we continue to let these castes and it's and it's not just in this culture, I think I've seen it in like, you know, East Africa as well, with tribes seen it a lot there. It's amazing that we continue with it, just given that our minds put this big focus on progress, but then discrimination is a barrier to progress, as we find in today's day and age. And given that India is very concerned about progress in monetary terms, i.e. economic growth, it's amazing that these divisions in society are allowed to exist. I think that they are allowed to exist, partially because we are so accepting of it, you know, this, this caste system has been going on for so long. And it is what it is, I am my caste, I accept it, you know, and that is it. And because I accept it, I accept that I might not get the opportunity of another caste. Or I might not, you know, be able to marry somebody of another caste. So that like acceptance in its, in itself has beauty. The reason why we see the caste system is because there have been probably a lot of groups in the past that have had huge bubbles of insecurity, and have gone about saying, Oh, I have a better profession, I am going to create this caste because I have this better profession. You know, because I am closer to the king, whatever you want to call it. But then the folks who didn't care, the ones that were accepting, "I don't care what profession I'll be whatever caste I want". Those are the folks that have been left behind by material progress, shall we call it that. But if they are still fully accepting of the position that they're in, then who knows, you know, a lot of India could be happier, then, then we're making out to through this caste system because they just accept, they just don't care. They don't let it act as a barrier on them. They just accept and move on.

Dev 04:16

The caste system, I would like to say that it will subside as our insecurity subside, more than anything. When that will be, who knows? But it's astonishing to see so much segmentation, segregation coming out of this one geographical location, even after a lot of negative impact caused by overseas powers, such as Britain in recent recorded history. And the most influential figure in India at the time, clearly denounced the caste system. People didn't really pay attention to it as much, you know, it's still continued in large numbers. And so it just shows that this caste system has become very deep rooted within the Desi culture. Even the words of Gandhi haven't have too much of a, of a bearing on it. So maybe it'll take a little bit longer to straighten out (chuckles). It's unfortunate, it is what it is. All we can do is just accept it. It's there, but does it matter to us? Not really. I'm not going to act any differently to anybody else because of a caste that they have associated to them. And then the only thing that we can do is be role models for that openness to future generations.

Grishma 05:51

As you may have thought, while listening to Madhubala, tell us about her experience being a mixed caste kid growing up, and Ivan and who tells us how progress can get halted by insecurities within a group of people, even after they have collectively experienced negative impact from their colonizers. This episode is on caste. I saved this episode for last because I knew this was going to be a doozy. There's just so much to say about this topic. In fact, you could do a whole gosh darn dissertation on caste. But for purposes of my dissertation, caste is just one facet of Desi culture that I wanted to explore. And the framework or the lens I'll be using to explore caste is of difference, which was created by Professor Marshall Ganz (Ganz, 2020). What I learned from the difference framework is that we have the *Us's* and the *Thems*. And it's pretty gosh darn easy to belong to one of these two categories. Just look at your smartphone listener and answer this simple question. Are you an Androider or an iPhoner? Depending on how dedicated you are to the cause, you may be yay or nay against a certain type of phone. The compatibility of Android may not be as sexy as the eliteness of the iPhone. Whatever the case may be no judgment (chuckles). Let's say one day, the CEO of a major store whose a dedicated iPhoner suggests that the folks with iPhones get free one day shipping, coupons, doorbusters, free stuff (chuckles). While the Androiders don't. According to the framework of difference, there are ways to respond with agencies to this type of act rather than reacting and egging this said CEO's house during Halloween. Not that you would. So how would you react?

Well, the Androiders could come together and unite by bounding narrowly, meaning just within the Android phone family. So the Google phoners, the Pixels, the Samsungs and all the non-iPhoners could come together and boycott said store. Another way to respond is by bounding broadly. So bringing in those folks that have used both kinds of phones, like me. Or reaching out to folks that enjoy switching out phones, like pygmy chimpanzees enjoy switching lovers, I also fall into this category, switching up phones I mean. It's not always the bigger the group, the more of the impact. Sometimes you do need to bound narrowly, so that you can create more influence. You could even reach out more broadly and reach out to non-Mac gamers. Bounding more broadly, you're able to find more allies, like in the gaming world. And when we're able to unite together in larger numbers with folks who share our value of compatibility, we can create more of an impact, which could be that the department store changes its rules and goes back to providing the same deals and services to everybody, regardless of their technology preferences.

Now that you understand the framework of difference, let's focus in on caste and difference, with a story. But before then, maybe you want to get a little comfortable, maybe sniff out some cheese and crackers and hurry back? If you didn't get that reference, I strongly recommend you check out part two of skin tone. So once-upon-a time, there was a man named Mr. Bheel, who lived in present day Karachi, Pakistan. Mr.

Bheel's family had lived in the same area for generations, even before Pakistan and India became two separate countries, which happened as we know in 1947. By 2014 Mr. Bheel's family was one of the few remaining Hindu families still living in Pakistan. So he decided it was best to leave Karachi for India. Leaving behind an impressive career as a medical clinic administrator, Mr. Bheel and his family arrived to India by train. But to their surprise, Bheel's medical diploma had little value in India. What was more important than Bheel's medical diploma? Believe it or not, it was his last name. Bheel is the last name of a "lower caste" person. And when Mr. Bheel tried to enter a temple in India, the pundit who was an upper caste Brahmin priest restricted him entry. When Mr. Bheel's friend tried to drink water from a community drinking well, the friend was assaulted by upper caste Brahmins. You know why the Brahmins assaulted this friend.?They believed that if a "lower caste" person drinks the water, the well will become polluted. Remember when Madhubala said something about Brahmins thinking they're more pure? I think she was on to something. Given the unrest between India and Pakistan, Mr. Bheel just wanted to be part of a community where he wanted to be free from discrimination. And he thought he would find that in India. But even in India, he faced discrimination, not for his religion, but for his caste. He asked himself if he made a mistake coming to India, because in Pakistan he was seeing just for his religion. And he was having a hard time providing for his family in India. He just hopes that one day his children will be glad that he took the decision to move to India. If you'd like to hear more about Mr. Bheel, you can find the link to the New York Times article, (Abi-habib, 2019) in this episode's transcript.

The reason why I wanted to share this story with the listener is because I feel the story really nicely explains the *Thems* and the *Us's*. And how we can change from moment to moment. I'd argue in this case, Mr. Bheel was the "Them" when he was in Pakistan, because he belonged to a minority religion, Hinduism. So as I understand it, Mr. Bheel thought that if he came to India, he could become the *Us's* since Hinduism was part of the majority religion. Which I'd argue he did, but just for a moment, though. Because there were so many *Us's* that the *Us's* bounded more narrowly, and got divided between castes, higher castes versus lower castes. Unfortunately, this is where our friend Mr. Bheel's last name made him yet again, part of the *Thems*. Because the *Us's* in this case where the Brahmins and the "upper caste" folks, while Mr. Bheel belonged to a family with a "lower caste" name.

Let's listen to Rajnikant tell us more about the caste system. From time to time, I'll chime in and share what I've learned from my Gita class teachers, the Google gods, and from the author of the book, *The Truth About Us*.

Rajnikant 13:23

Okay, so this is a very complicated topic, I agree the caste system exists. So I have seen, read news. You know, in the rural area, caste system exists really, really rampantly. But the environment that I was brought up in, I wasn't facing any consequences on that. I didn't personally, so that's one thing. But that doesn't mean it doesn't exist. The second thing is, although the caste system does have lots of issues, because politically, it's mostly used for in India politics, it's mostly used for getting the votes, but then, you know, not doing anything for the people who are considered to be, "lower caste", that's what they call them. And that's not the way how you should be treating them. But that's, that's an idea in India. So, you know, even though for the vote bank, the politics have to be such, but they're not treated well. But then that has created another barrier, understanding how things work in India because, you know, reservations come into consideration. So now, the number of seats allocated in a university or like, let's say, job wise, you know, reservation come into consideration since caste is the case. And that becomes a little bit difficult because then it's completely complicated the way how caste has been integrated in India now, and it's not going to go away. It's there to stay. And the problem is, everybody has their own positives and issues with caste system in India, including the lower caste and the people who consider it to be in their reservation system. You know, because, again, the "lower caste" people actually are given that reservation. It's good, it's bad, it's like a lot of debate going on.

Grishma 15:17

Reservation? How does it work, according to you?

Rajnikant 15:22

Caste system was so badly implemented in India, that there was no way that the lower caste, that's what they say, could be given any choices of studying. So they will not allow to, you know, get into schools, or study, even hold positions in government jobs, or like any other jobs, because they were not deemed worthy of it. Even though they were, that's not the case. But the thing is, like, you know, that's what the concept was. And to get rid of these consequences, you know, there was reservation added into the Constitution that was like need of the hour, I would say, at that time. But the problem was, it was hardly there for like 10-20 years in the Constitution, you know, slowly, they would just fade it out. It did not happen and they kept on increasing the reservation numbers. And now, it's been almost 30, 40, 50 percent, I don't know how much, but it's been huge numbers of reservations. That actually has made it really difficult for other people, because now they started taking it negatively, the reservation, even though the reservation was for a good cause. A lot of people have had bad experiences with it, one of them being my friend. So I have had friends who have actually benefited from reservation, and who has really, really had issues with reservations. So one of my very

good friend, he was able to get admission into my undergrad, it was because of reservation and he was really smart. And he was able to do really well. So that actually made him get through, you know, instead of like, wait. My other friend, he wasn't like into this, "lower caste" and he actually didn't have money to pay for like, really expensive colleges. And at that time, in India, these expensive colleges gave like 100% tuition fee for the reservation seats. He wasn't able to study his favorite field, because he wasn't able to pay for that. He was getting the seat, but the only problem was because of his monetary conditions. But here, my friend who actually got it through the reservation, like you know, his dad, mom were really well to do. He had no issues paying his fees. But he still didn't pay fees at all. And the friend of mine who actually got in, didn't get into the university because he wasn't able to pay the fees for those universities. So that's the reason I think reservation has both like, you know, it can be positive, but then there are I can also see the negative. And I don't know, like you know, there is like a straight answer to that thing. You know, this is it, this is what we should do, and solve everything. So it's really complicated.

Grishma 18:09

Yeah, it sounds really complicated. What does lower caste mean?

Rajnikant 18:15

In India, this has been happening for hundreds of years, maybe even thousand, I don't know. India has been, you know, segregated into this caste system, where people actually are divided into, basically kind of profession. So, the highest caste is considered in India is called the Brahmin caste, which is like the knowledgeable caste, the teachers, the philosophers, informers, people who actually have knowledge. They are the ones who are like the prime supreme caste. And they're like, given all the priorities, and I wouldn't say 100% luxury, but like they are treated really well. They have all the things.

Grishma 18:57

Try to imagine a triangle. The pointest tip that shoots straight up to the sky, is held by *Brahmins* (BBC, 2019). They are thought to be the closest to God as of today. Back in the day, they were the ones that could read and write Sanskrit, the language of the Scriptures, because they could read and write the Sanskrit language, they were the educators and also the doctors. Because the scriptures also held information about Ayurvedic treatments to heal whatever ails ya (Saini, 2016). Nowadays, though, *Brahmins* are the priests that recite rituals and do poojas or prayers. Very few get the training to be a priest, as in go to Gurukul which is a school where you learn how to read and write Sanskrit and learn the philosophies behind the meanings through a guru.

Remember when I introduced you to Dr. Mayank Shah, and told you that he was a physician and part time Hindu priest. He's also a Gita class teacher. He actually went to Gurukul and studied under a guru for many years, and also learned the philosophy behind the Hindu rituals and their meanings. But even still, he's not considered a Hindu priest by a majority of people, because he doesn't have the *Brahmin* last name. You see, back in the day before colonization, caste was fluid, it wasn't your name that made your occupation it was your actions (Amin, 2021; BBC, 2019; Chakravorthy, 2019). So if you taught "true religion," to everyone, which was and still is that everyone is divine, and that everyone is equal, you were following the actions of a *Brahmin*. Not so much the case these days, though. If your last name is of a *Brahmin* caste, and you're a man, you can pick up the holy book and recite the mantras and you're good to go to be considered a Hindu priest.

Rajnikant 21:04

And then it keeps on going lower. The second one is, I think, the kings and then the warriors, because they actually fight for their kingdom, their territory. So the knowledgeable, the philosophers actually guide the kings.

Grishma 21:21

Just below the *Brahmins* are the *Kshatriyas* (BBC, 2019). They are the warriors and the rulers like the kings, who are ready to serve and protect, "true religion" (Amin, 2021), which we learned was that everyone is divine and that everyone is equal. These warriors were provided daily guidance by the Brahmins, who as you recall, were the teachers of true religion. You can think of Brahmin advisors as present day doctors who are always on-call. A popular *Kshatriya* was Arjun from Mahabharat. He's so popular that my professor Marshall Ganz's brought him up the other day, as he was re-reading the Bhagavad Gita (Bunker Hill Community College), which is where the story of Mahabharat can be found. Arjun though he was a warrior, felt overcome by the war he was supposed to fight in, because he knew that a lot of people were going to die. And many of these people had families. So he decided in the middle of the battlefield, to place down his bow. He asked his charioteer, Krishna for guidance. And Krishna, the charioteer, carried the duties of a *Brahmin*, not by name, but by action. He reminded Arjun that these folks that he's fighting against, don't believe in equality. They were ready to disrobe and assault a woman because they felt that they could. What kind of world would we be leaving behind for future generations if we did not fight this kind of injustice?

Rajnikant 22:57

And then you've got all the merchants.

Grishma 23:02

After the *Kshatriyas*, we have the *Vaishyas*, (BBC, 2019), who are the merchants, who trade goods and services. Shah is a popular last name for merchants and I have that last name. The merchants are the folks that are the businessowners, present day LLC-ers, S-Corpers, C-Corpers, 1099 consultants. They do not have a boss, rather they work for themselves. And because of that, they can offer sliding scale prices to people, for their goods and services. My other Gita class teacher is Bharat Amin, whose a retired entrepreneur and engineer. He too went to Gurukul and learned under a guru for many, many years learning Sanskrit philosophies and meanings. He told me a story about his father who was a doctor. His father would not charge patients were facing hard times financially, maybe they recently had lost their job because of a pandemic. Whatever the case may be, sometimes, the doctor even gave money to his patients so that they could get x-rays and other much needed tests done. On the flip side, the same doctor had patients that were having their best year in terms of finances, and these patients had no problem paying the doctor's fees. Everyone got the same quality of healthcare, because the doctor who was a merchant in this scenario was able to provide his services to everyone and practice true religion (Amin, 2020). Everyone is divine and everyone is equal.

Rajnikant 24:47

After that, workers which is basically doing all the work. Simple work, like you know, the carpenter and cobbler and the blacksmith, those kind of things. So this was like really old in India, that time.

Grishma 25:01

The last category in *caste*, which is an English word (Chakravorthy, 2019) is *Shudras*, known to be the labourers, according to the BBC article, (BBC, 2019). The way I understand *Shudras*, from my Gita class teachers (Amin, 2021) is that *Shudras* are service providers who have bosses. The majority of folks today are in the *Shudra* category. Almost all of us have a boss or supervisor right? Now, how does someone who has a boss provide equal or equitable service? My mind says that we try our hardest to provide the best service we can to anyone. And we treat our assistants the same way we would treat our bosses, treat our customers and clients the same way that we would treat our supervisors. Because everyone is divine and everyone is equal. But you may or may not be able to provide a sliding scale of service prices to your customer or client, without putting your job at jeopardy. Of course, if you own your own company, or work

for yourself doing the same gosh darn thing, then you can! And you would fall under the merchant category, where you get to create a sliding scale for your prices. Do you see how these categories are extremely fluid?

Rajnikant 26:24

And then I think that is like another caste is not even considered a caste. But that's what they're called the lower caste, which is basically like, they call them, *the untouchables* in India, which is basically you don't even have to deal with them kind of thing. And it's really, really difficult, like, you know, they cannot even like, cross the same path. Like, you know, same street, they cannot use the same wells at that time to drink water, or like, they cannot use the same well, they cannot own lands, other times, they cannot study, they were not able to own any property or something. So it was really bad at that time. This was old India, I'm talking about. But now, it's not the case. I mean, there are like laws against it in India. Lower caste cannot buy a land, it's illegal now, you cannot stop somebody from doing that because, they are from lower caste. So the government has been trying, but it's not completely there. And now it's become more politically motivated, and it's more money. So lower castes are the people who were really, who had no good support system from the society since like, hundreds of years, thousands of years. And after the independent India, when the central government came into power, and they started changing things, it has become much more progressive for the so called lower caste people. But it's still not there 100% yet, because, you know, they have been suffering since thousands of years or hundreds of years of oppression. So, you know, it's not at the level, which you can consider them to be because they've never owned anything, they've never been given an opportunity to be equal. So that's where they are. So that's still like, you know, not 100% like you know, as considered equal even now, even in today's world.

Grishma 28:09

And that is the community now referred to as *Dalit* (BBC, 2019) which was once referred to as *the untouchables*. It was difficult to find someone from the *Dalit* community to interview, I'll be honest, and it's also understandable. As you may remember, from the story I shared earlier, Mr. Bheel was considered a "lower caste" person because of his name. And this name prevented him from entering temples, even drinking water from a community well. Folks from the *Dalit* community are considered, "outcasts" (BBC, 2019). Because their families had occupations in the past as street and bathroom cleaners, (BBC, 2019). Basically, less luxurious jobs. Mr. Bheel had a frickin medical diploma, and he was still having a hard time making ends meet and supporting his family, remember? His training and education mattered very little compared to his caste identity in India. What do you do when you're having a hard time finding a job?

Because bosses aren't looking at your skills and your assets. They're looking at what they consider as your deficits like disability, gender, religion, and in this case caste. The Truth About Us, (Chakravorthy, 2019), Chakravorthy states India's current state of social identities, be that of religion, caste, tribes, is actually a result of choices made by those in power throughout different points in time. And that these choices were based on subjective truths, which served those in power. The Sanskrit text (Amin, 2019) only mentions those four categories and anyone everyone fits into one of those categories. My understanding is, the reason why these categories existed was to maintain equality amongst people. As our author friend Chakravorthy also argued in his book because of colonization and for categorization and simplification reasonings, the British took selected texts, had them translated by the Brahmins, then the British decided on which of these translations to use for their own personal gains. It's also argued by Chakravorthy, (Chakravorthy, 2019) that these brahmans also had certain gains; he considers Hinduism to be more Brahmanism, because the Brahmins were the ones that got the most privileges out of Hinduism. True Religion (Amin, 2021) is, everyone is equal and everyone is divine. How can *Brahmin* be the closest and the purest to God? If everyone is divine, and everyone is equal then everyone is closest to God, at the same capacity, and everyone is pure. Something doesn't fit. So then how can we have upper castes and lower castes? It's supposed to be more lateral and equal, not a hierarchy. And that's why I feel lower castes are not even mentioned in the varnas, (Wikimedia). The author (Chakravorthy, 2019), argued that the word Hindu isn't even a Sanskrit word. It was likely created by the British. Another site suggested that the word Hindu came from the European languages borrowed by the Arabic word *Al-Hind* which meant folks that lived across from the Indus River, (Florida State College). For all we know, Hinduism was called something entirely different. And thanks to colonization, it's now called Hinduism. Even my Gita class teacher calls it Vedic religion instead of Hinduism. But *Desi* can be found in Sanskrit text, which translates to *country person* (Wikimedia, 2021). And in *Deshi Sangeet* (FretmuZika, 2019), *sangeet* is defined as music, where *Deshi* is defined as for the common people, which I understand as a group of individuals from a geographical region, like a community. I see *Desi* as a name that was created amongst *community*, rather than it be given by outsiders, like the British.

Remember, when Rajnikant said lower caste was an idea in India? Chakravorthy argues, (Chakravorthy, 2019), it's these kinds of ideas that people in power were able to promote so that these ideas could become realities. According to the author, three things really shaped the politics of information, power, technology, and simplification (Chakravorthy, 2019). I spoke about power in a previous episode, using the framework of Harvard professor Marshall Ganz (Ganz, 2020). This author had some similar points, when he asks us to question: Who has the power? How much of it do they have? How much influence does their power carry in transforming their choice into "truth" or reality? And what is this powerful person's intention anyways? What's in it for them? He even argued

that pure knowledge doesn't really exist in our social world. Because our positionality affects us more than we think. That's also what the field of Community Psychology, what I'm doing my PhD in, agrees with (Arcidiacono, 2017). As psychologists, it's important for us to state our *positionality*, how we see the world, early on. That's why I thought it was important to tell you that I identify as Desi, I'm a woman and I have a disability. I had cancer three times and as a result of that, I lost my arm when I was 18. And because I had lost my arm, it became more difficult for me to get married. In fact, I was actually secretly engaged to someone. And he had a hard time telling his family that he proposed to me. When he finally did tell his family, they said that I wasn't worthy. The minute marriage was on the table, I became *Them*, the unworthy, I was as pale as a zombie. I was a size zero, I was very well educated, more educated than the boy in fact, and I came from a higher caste than the boy. But I am still considered a *Them* because of my physical disability, not an *Us*. And the rest they say, is history. After that incident, I started to question my worth as a human being. And that got pretty dark. I even had to do, like my own version of *Eat, Pray and Love*, where I went to Africa, and I taught college students. It was actually was one of the best experiences of my life. Even to this day, I still question from time to time, if I'm worthy enough to live my best life, to be loved, to have kids, to marry. All of those things that a majority of us take for granted. Because they know their self-worth. And their community knows their worth. It reminded me what Mumtaz said in a previous episode, if you don't see and hear of stories of people like you succeeding in life, it can really make you or break you. Professor Chakravorthy, reminded me that we all need to live our stupid lives. And he actually gave me a really good example, how love can triumph over what everybody else has to say. Or as in Hindi, what we say, *Log Kya Kahenge?* What will people think?

Professor Chakravorthy 36:46

The visibility matters, right? The visible disability, missing a limb is very visible. Skin color is very visible. I mean, but these become really the major points of difference right? In or out. And it's very easy to see certain things. I was growing up and my next door neighbor, there were three brothers and a sister. And the eldest brother was this handsome, smart, young man. And he had green eyes and like, he looked almost foreign and very good in studies. And he went to the best schools and then we got news. He was getting married, it was a few years older than me. And the girl who he was marrying, was disabled. One of her legs was crippled. And the community was like, *What is this boy doing, I mean his worth is so much more?* He is like this, I am type and handsome. He was already a kind of, senior manager in one of the multinationals. Well, he was marrying one of his classmates. She was the same, a senior manager in another multinational, extremely smart. I visited them after their marriage, and they were obviously very good friends. But to the rest of the community, none of that had value, none of that had worth. Their only thing was, *why is a highly eligible young man* and he

was as eligible as they come in India, *marrying this, you know, almost worthless person?* This is who we are Grishma, what can I say? More power to them. They had kids.

And I mean, their family was visited by tragedy, that may have informed him. One of his brothers just died while in college from an asthma attack inside his hostel room, and it was such a strong attack, he could not get up and open the door and get help. This thinking must have been different. He must have been thinking, *No, I can't think like stupid people, I got to follow my heart.* Which is what he did. *I can't rely on judgments of worthiness made by other people who are not living my life. They are living their own stupid lives, we are all living our own stupid lives. I gotta make these judgments on my own.*

(Cheerful music begins)

So there are people who, you got to find that person. I mean, it's just luck, of course, the randomness of things. In all of this bouncing around, whom do you happen to meet at the right time in your life?

Grishma 39:40

I am a hardcore romantic, I will find romance in the scariest movie. So let's end part one with that love story. Join me in part two, when I introduce you to our 11th and *last* storyteller, who has a non-for-profit called *Dalit Solidarity*.

(Cheerful music ends)

End of Caste Part 1 transcript

References

- Abi-habib, M. (2019, October 5). Hard Times Have Pakistani Hindus Looking to India, Where Some Find Only Disappointment. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/05/world/asia/pakistan-hindu-india-modi.html>.
- Ahmed, T. (1995, March 10). *The population of persons with disabilities in Pakistan*. Asia-Pacific population journal. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12319484/>.

Anees, S. (2014). Disability in India: The role of gender, family, and religion. *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*, 45(2), 32–37.

Arcidiacono, C. (2017). The Community Psychologist as a Reflective Plumber. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 8(1), pages 1-16. Retrieved 24/June/ 2021, from <https://www.gjcpp.org/en/article.php?issue=25&article=158>

BBC. (2017, July 28). India top court orders changes in anti-dowry law to stop misuse. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-40749636#:~:text=The%20practice%20of%20dowry%20has,jewellery%20to%20the%20groom's%20family.>

BBC. (2019, June 19). What is India's caste system? BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-35650616>.

Bunker Hill Community College. (n.d.). Krishna and Arjuna speak of war in the Bhagavad Gita - The Art of Persuasion: Past and Present. Google Sites. <https://sites.google.com/site/persuasionpast/home/krishna-and-arjuna-speak-of-war-in-the-bhagavad-gita>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, September 16). Disability Impacts All of Us Infographic. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/infographic-disability-impacts-all.html>.

Chakravorthy, S. (2019) *The Truth about Us: The Politics of Information from Manu to Modi*. Hachette India.

Croot, E. J., Grant, G., Cooper, C. L., & Mathers, N. (2008). Perceptions of the causes of childhood disability among Pakistani families living in the UK. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 16(6), 606–613. <https://doi-org.nl.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/j.1365-2524.2008.00784.x>

Das, S. (n.d.). Saraswati: The Vedic Goddess of Knowledge and Arts. Learn Religions. <https://www.learnreligions.com/saraswati-goddess-of-knowledge-and-arts-1770370>.

Das, T., S. G., R. B., & S. R. (2020, September 8). Bollywood's love for fair skin runs so deep that even Beyonce couldn't escape it. *ThePrint*. <https://theprint.in/opinion/pov/bollywoods-love-for-fair-skin-runs-so-deep-that-even-beyonce-couldnt-escape-it/498198/>.

- Dishman, L. (2020, June 18). We need to talk about how media and creatives portray Black people. Fast Company.
<https://www.fastcompany.com/90512750/we-need-to-talk-about-how-media-and-creatives-portray-black-people>.
- Encyclopedia Britannica, inc. (n.d.). *Ganesha*. Encyclopedia Britannica.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ganesha>.
- Educalingo (n.d.). DESI - Definition and synonyms of desi in the English dictionary.
<https://educalingo.com/en/dic-en/desi>.
- Fuchs, M.-M., & Fuchs, S. W. (2019, December 12). *Religious Minorities in Pakistan: Identities, Citizenship and Social Belonging*. Tandfonline.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00856401.2020.1695075>.
- Heumann, J. (n.d.). Road Map for Inclusion . Road Map for Inclusion: Changing the Face of Disability in Media.
https://www.fordfoundation.org/media/4276/judyheumann_report_2019_final.pdf.
- Hooks, B. (2000). All about love: New visions. New York: William Morrow.
- Diwakar, A. (2020, September 15). A Silicon Valley lawsuit reveals caste discrimination is rife in the US.
<https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/a-silicon-valley-lawsuit-reveals-caste-discrimination-is-rife-in-the-us-39773>.
- Donnella, L. (2019, February 6). Is Beauty In The Eyes Of The Colonizer? NPR.
<https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2019/02/06/685506578/is-beauty-in-the-eyes-of-the-colonizer>.
- Dutton, D. (2010). A Darwinian theory of beauty. TED.
https://www.ted.com/talks/denis_dutton_a_darwinian_theory_of_beauty#t-779850.
- Dweck, C. S. (2006). "The Mindsets" (p1-10) in *Mindset: The New Psychology Of Success*. Ballantine Books
- Florida State College at. (n.d.). World Religions. Lumen.
<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/atd-fscj-worldreligions/chapter/etymology-and-history/>.
- FretmuZika. (2019, March 22). Margi & Deshi Sangeet. Basics of Indian Music.
<https://indianmusicbasic.blogspot.com/2019/03/margi-deshi-sangeet.html?m=1>.

- Gandhiok, T. (2020, October 5). Colourism: How Indian Society Otherises People With Dark Skin. SheThePeople TV.
<https://www.shethepeople.tv/home-top-video/what-colourism-how-indian-society-otherises-people-with-dark-skin/>.
- Ganz, M (2020). Part 2: Loss, Difference, Power, Change. Harvard University.
- Ghai, A. (2002). Disabled Women: An Excluded Agenda of Indian Feminism. *Hypatia*, 17(3), 49-66. Retrieved May 8, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3810795>
- Hinduism Today. (2021, May 8). *God, Soul and World*. Hinduism Today.
<https://www.hinduismtoday.com/hindu-basics/god-soul-and-world/>.
- Hussain, Y., Atkin, K., & Ahmad W. (2002). South Asian disabled young people and their families. The Policy Press.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237252917_South_Asian_Disabled_Young_People_and_Their_Families
- I. T. V. N. (2015, November 9). Why we worship Lakshmi-Ganesh on Diwali and not Rama?: IndiaTV News. English.
<https://www.indiatvnews.com/lifestyle/news/diwali-lakshmi-ganesh-worship-5661.html>.
- Imam, Z. (1994). India bans female feticide. *BMJ*, 309(6952), 428–428.
<https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.309.6952.428>
- Iqbal, N. (2020, December 3). Explained: How much of India's population lives with disabilities? The Indian Express.
<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-how-much-of-indias-population-lives-with-disabilities-7088195/>.
- Jones, L. (2020, June 25). Unilever renames Fair & Lovely skin cream after backlash. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-53178088>.
- Love, A. (2019, January 30). How to Live a Sattvic Lifestyle for Optimum Health. Bodhidevi.
<http://www.bodhidevi.com/2019/01/30/how-to-live-a-sattvic-lifestyle-for-optimum-health/#:~:text=A%20Sattvic%20state%20of%20mind,is%20a%20sacred%2C%20divine%20energy.>
- McAdams, D. P., McAdams, D. P. (Ed.), Josselson, R. (Ed.), & Lieblich, A. (Ed.) (2001). *Turns in the road: Narrative studies of lives in transition*. American Psychological Association Press.
- Mukherji, A. (2021, March 10). California's Legal Ground in Battling Caste Discrimination Takes Centre Stage in Historic Cisco Case. The Wire.

- <https://thewire.in/caste/cisco-case-caste-discrimination-silicon-valley-ambedkar-organisations>.
- Nagar, I. (2018). The Unfair Selection: A Study on Skin-Color Bias in Arranged Indian Marriages. SAGE Open. April 2018. doi:10.1177/2158244018773149
- News18. (2020, April 8). A Dangerous Fallout of Coronavirus Pandemic: Govt Suspends Ban on Sex Determination Test. News18.com: CNN-News18 Breaking News India, Latest News Headlines, Live News Updates.
<https://www.news18.com/news/buzz/a-dangerous-fallout-of-coronavirus-pandemic-govt-suspends-ban-on-sex-determination-test-2569477.html>.
- Pal, G. C. (2010). Dalit With Disabilities: The Neglected Dimensions of Social Exclusion. Indian Institute of Dalit Studies , 4(3), 1–41.
<https://doi.org/http://www.dalitstudies.org.in/wp/1003.pdf>
- Pandey, R. S. (2016, April 18). Divine Mother Adi Parashakti. Medium.
https://medium.com/@rsp_delhi/divine-mother-adi-parashakti-16b9206c5630.
- Pattanaik D. (2019, September 20). The colour of Krishna's skin: Indian Mythology.
<https://devdutt.com/articles/the-colour-of-krishnas-skin/>.
- Picheta, R. (2021, March 14). Meghan reveals 'concerns' within royal family about her baby's skin color. CNN.
<https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/08/uk/meghan-oprah-interview-racism-scli-gbr-intl/index.html>.
- Rana, S. (2017, September 11). Believe it or not: Pakistan has only less than a million citizens with disabilities. The Express Tribune .
<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1503496/sixth-population-census-people-disabilities-stand-less-1m-pakistan>.
- Religion Census 2011. Religion Data - Population of Hindu / Muslim / Sikh / Christian - Census 2011 India. (n.d.). <https://www.census2011.co.in/religion.php>.
- Ritu (2017, January 15). Jalandhara and Vrinda. freeflow.
<http://ritsin.com/jalandhara-and-vrinda.html/>.
- Saini A. (2016). Physicians of ancient India. Journal of family medicine and primary care, 5(2), 254–258. <https://doi.org/10.4103/2249-4863.192322>
- Santos, L. (2021, April 4). The Happiness Lab with Dr. Laurie Santos: Happiness Lessons of The Ancients: The Torah. The Happiness Lab. Pushkin Industries.
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/happiness-lessons-of-the-ancients-the-torah/id1474245040?i=1000515776672>.

- Santos, L. (2021). The Happiness Lab with Dr. Laurie Santos: Happiness Lessons of The Ancients: Forgiveness. The Happiness Lab. Pushkin Industries.
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/happiness-lessons-of-the-ancients-forgiveness/id1474245040?i=1000517690775>.
- Scott, J. (1990). Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts. Yale University Press. Retrieved June 25, 2021, from
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1np6zz>
- Sengupta, S. (2021, May 25). Ahaan Review: A heartwarming, sensitive watch.
<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/web-series/reviews/hindi/ahaan/ottmovie-review/82793985.cms>.
- Simko-Bednarski, E. (2021, May 13). Lawsuit claims New Jersey Hindu temple was built on forced labor. CNN.
<https://www.cnn.com/2021/05/12/us/new-jersey-baps-hindu-temple-suit/index.html>.
- Sircar, A. (2021, January 9). Is the term 'Desi' offensive? Some South Asian Americans think so. Scroll.in.
<https://scroll.in/global/975071/is-the-term-desi-offensive-some-south-asian-americans-think-so>.
- Sonam Sheth, M. H. (2021, March 24). These 8 charts show the glaring gap between men's and women's salaries in the US. Business Insider.
<https://www.businessinsider.com/gender-wage-pay-gap-charts-2017-3#another-way-of-looking-at-that-gap-for-women-of-different-racial-and-ethnic-groups-is-to-consider-when-equal-pay-day-for-each-group-falls-5>.
- Swaminarayanglory. (2019, July 25). The disrobing of Draupadi. Swaminarayan Glory.
<https://swaminarayanglory.wordpress.com/2018/03/17/the-disrobing-of-draupadi/>.
- Waxman, O. B. (2020, August 17). When Did Black Women Get the Right to Vote? Suffrage History. Time.
<https://time.com/5876456/black-women-right-to-vote/>.
- Wikimedia Foundation. (n.d). Desi. Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desi>.
- Wikimedia Foundation. (n.d.). Gender. Wikipedia.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender>.
- Wikimedia Foundation. (n.d.). Varna (Hinduism). Wikipedia.
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varna_\(Hinduism\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varna_(Hinduism)).

Wikimedia Foundation. (n.d.). *The White Tiger (2021 film)*. Wikipedia.
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_White_Tiger_\(2021_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_White_Tiger_(2021_film)).

Wikimedia Foundation. (n.d.). *Who Moved My Cheese?* Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Who_Moved_My_Cheese%3F.

Winslade, J. & Monk, G., (2000). Narrative Mediation: A New Approach to Conflict Resolution. 36.

###