



magical abilities. Every time, I won a prize, Alya would infuse one of her magical traits into me, as an appreciation.

As my eyes looked through the hedge, I saw Chord lying on the patio. I discovered a tiny gap at the bottom of the hedge. I touched it with my paw and the gap widened. I held out my right paw. A faint silver light wafted out from my nails. Circling my body once, the light penetrated my body, making me invisible. This was useful whenever I went exploring into enemy terrain.

Chord lay on his side, his eyes closed and mouth open. Beside him was his black feeding bowl. It had a few faint reddish-brown stains. My eyes widened, as I studied the bowl, recognising the faint shape on one side of the bowl. A cat. What a sadist! Eating from a bowl painted with a pink cat.

Turning the tables

An idea flashed into my mind. It took just a second to make

my decision. No one knew I was a ventriloquist. Except for Alya from whom I had no secrets. I had discovered it quite by accident and it wasn't a talent I liked to publicise. I smiled, as a faint meow floated in the air. Chord stirred.

I made my voice louder. "Meow. Meow."

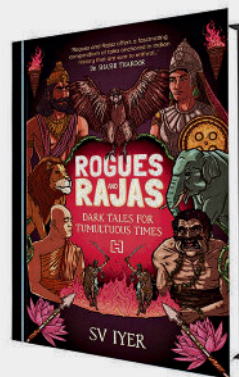
The dog opened his eyes. They were wide with fear, as he turned his head sideways. He looked at the pink cat painted on the bowl. Gulping nervously, he stared at it. I kept meowing. To Chord, it seemed as though the cat on the bowl was meowing.

M-E-O-W, M-E-O-W. The final two meows did it. Yelping like a frightened puppy, Chord bounded into the house, his tail tucked firmly between his legs.

Laughing heartily, I strolled back home. I had taken revenge on Chord for disturbing my sleep and scaring the hell out of me. Having magical traits did have its perks. Especially when it came to settling scores.

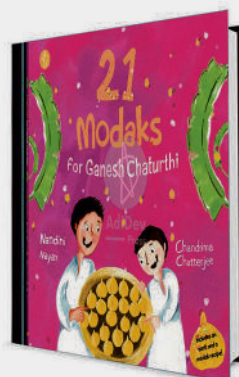


Bookworm



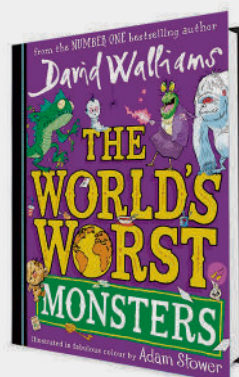
Title: Rogues and Rajas: Dark Tales for Tumultuous Times
Author: S.V. Iyer
Publisher: Hachette India
Price: ₹499

A prince so reviled that he is determined to become the monster everyone calls him. A queen who crushes every challenger who dares to rise. A craftsman who uses his divine talents to steal from the national treasury. Revealing the gambles, betrayals, and plots of fierce rulers of ancient India — from Ashoka of Magadha to Peruvalathan of Tamilakam — and of common folk no less menacing, these are tales of an age when intrigue was rife and offence was the first defence.



Title: 21 Modaks For Ganesh Chaturthi
Author: Nandini Nayar
Publisher: AdiDev Press
Price: ₹399

Neeraj and Nitin are busy helping their Ai and Baba get ready to celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi. As they run errands, clean their room, and put up decorations, they can't stop thinking about one thing: how many modaks will they get to eat?



Book: The World's Worst Monsters
Author: David Walliams
Publisher: HarperCollins
Price: ₹699

You have met the world's worst children, the world's worst parents, the world's worst teachers and the world's worst pets, but are you ready for the world's worst monsters? Revel in the array of frightfully fun characters including Lord Phantom who has woken up after 500 years to discover that his home has been turned into a theme park, Amber who is convinced her parents and little brother are vampires, Buster who discovers his new pen pal might just be a werewolf and Rose who is on the trail to uncover the true story of the Loch Ness Monster.