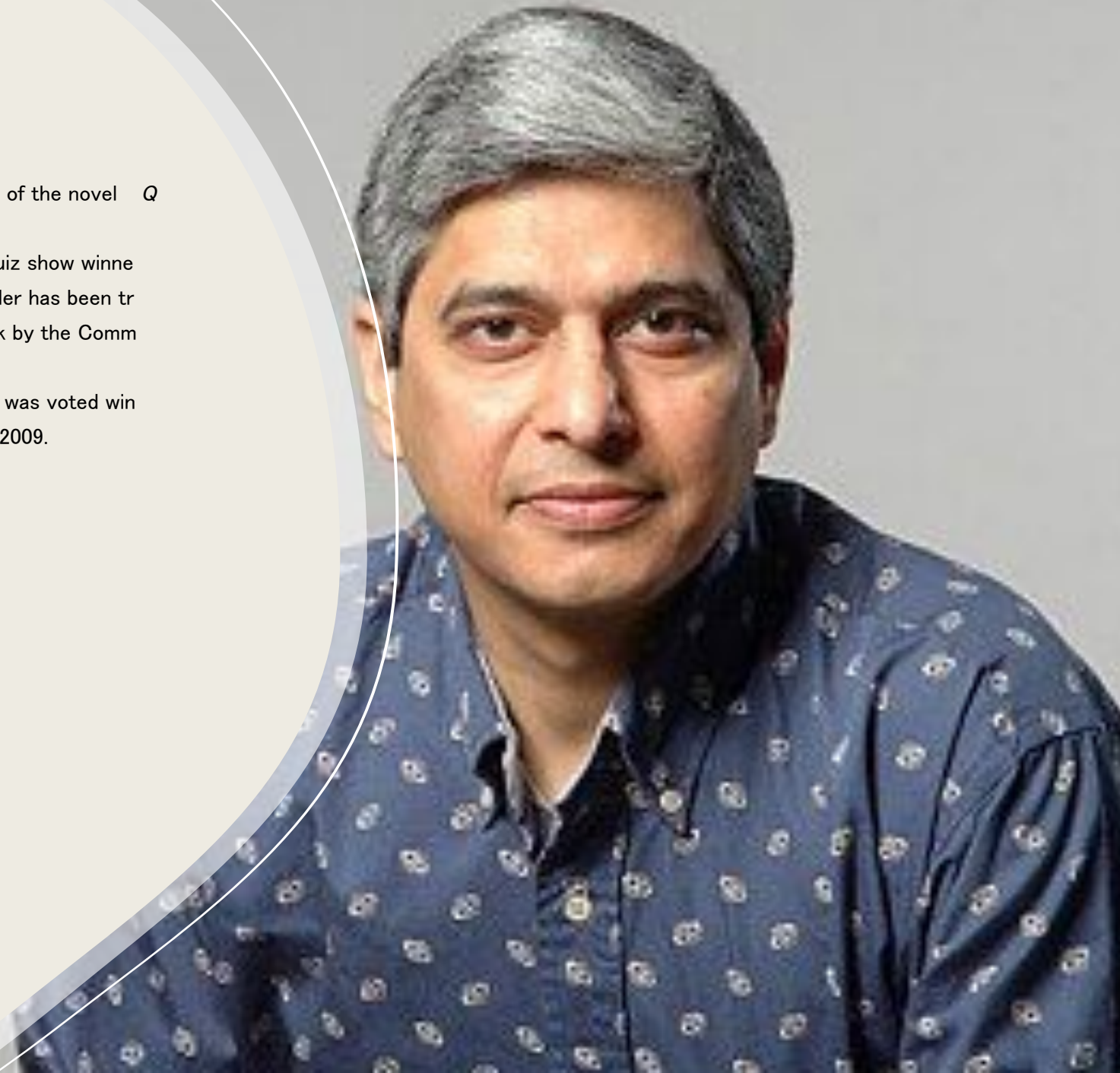


Q&A

By Vikas Swarup

Vikas Swarup is an Indian diplomat and writer. He is best known as the author of the novel *Q & A*. Swarup's debut novel, *Q & A*, tells the story of how a penniless waiter in Mumbai becomes the biggest quiz show winner in history. Critically acclaimed in India and abroad, this international best-seller has been translated into 43 different languages. It was shortlisted for the Best First Book by the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and won South Africa's Exclusive Books Book of the Year Prize in 2006, as well as the Prix Grand Public at the 2007 Paris Book Fair. It was voted winner of the Best Travel Read (Fiction) at the Heathrow Travel Product Award 2009.





Prologue

The novel begins with Ram Mohammed Thomas being abducted by the police at night. The police torture him and ask him about the quiz show he starred in, Who wants to win a billion? Ram won the quiz before the producers had enough money to actually award the winner of the first prize, and the police try to get Ram to admit that he cheated to say that he didn't deserve the prize.

Name the blockbusting film in which Armaan Ali starred with Priya Kapoor for the very first time? Was it (a) *Fire*, (b) *Hero*, (c) *Hunger*, or (d) ***Betrayal?***”

Ram knows the answer to the question after the story that happened to him and his friend Salim in the cinema. The two of them came to watch a movie about Armaan Ali, of which Salim was a fan. Salim didn't want to believe the terrible rumors about his idol. But it was in this movie theater that the incident occurred. Salim was harassed by his hero Armaan Ali. According to Salim, Ram knows the answer to this question.



What is the sequence of letters normally inscribed on a cross? Is it a) IRNI, b) INRI, c) RINI or d) NIRI?

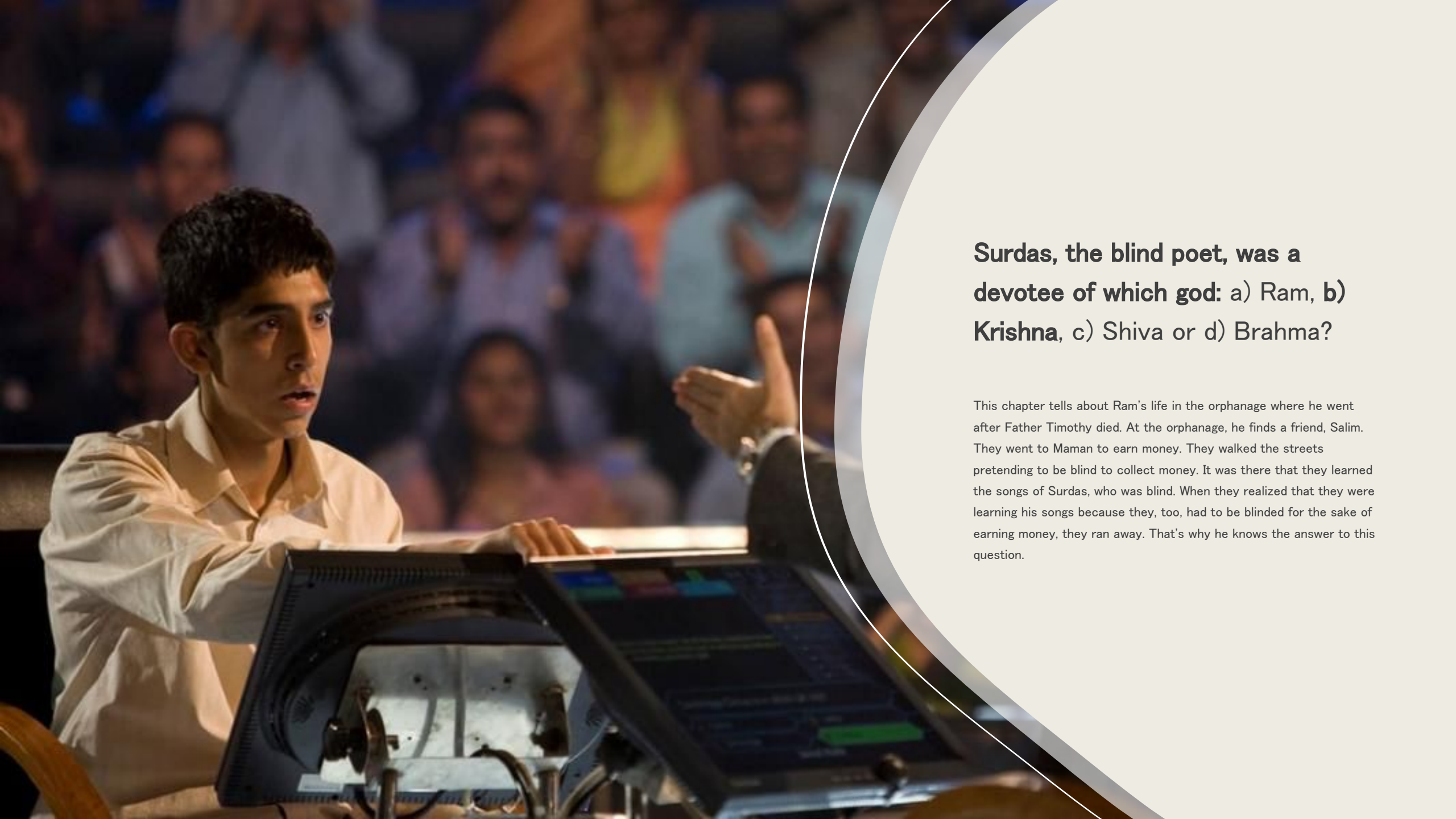
This chapter is about Ram's childhood. Immediately after his birth, he was sent to an orphanage. where father Timothy took him from. He gave it a Christian, Muslim and Hindu name to protect it from the civil wars in India. He also learned English there. And he learned almost everything about the Catholic Church. That was why he knew the answer to the question.



Which is the smallest planet in our solar system? Is it a) Pluto, b) Mars, c) Neptune or d) Mercury?’

In this chapter, Salim and Ram work for a man who has a daughter. The father beats his daughter every day and one day the girl was sent to the hospital from her injuries. Then Ram promised the girl that he would look after her cat, whose name is Pluto. That’s why he knows the answer to the question. At the end of the chapter, Ram thinks he killed the girl’s father. He threw him from the top floor of the house.





Surdas, the blind poet, was a devotee of which god: a) Ram, b) Krishna, c) Shiva or d) Brahma?

This chapter tells about Ram's life in the orphanage where he went after Father Timothy died. At the orphanage, he finds a friend, Salim. They went to Maman to earn money. They walked the streets pretending to be blind to collect money. It was there that they learned the songs of Surdas, who was blind. When they realized that they were learning his songs because they, too, had to be blinded for the sake of earning money, they ran away. That's why he knows the answer to this question.



When a government declares a foreign diplomat persona non grata, what does it mean? Is it a) that the diplomat is to be honoured, b) that the diplomat's tenure should be extended, c) that the diplomat is grateful or d) **that the diplomat is not acceptable?**

In this chapter, Ram works for the wealthy Taylor family. The head of the family took his wealth for granted. But he was kind to Ram and trusted him. At the end of the chapter, Taylor was arrested for high treason and deported. He became persona non grata in India.

What is the capital of Papua New Guinea? Is it a) Port Louis, b) Port-au-Prince, c) Port Moresby or d) Port Adelaide?’

This chapter is about Ram working as a bartender in Mumbai. There he meets a man named prakash rao. He tells how his wife from New Guinea made him a voodoo doll. He tells him stories about how he stole money from his brother. And how he gave him headaches with the voodoo doll. At the end of the chapter, it is revealed that his brother has died.





Who invented the revolver? Was it a) Samuel Colt, b) Bruce Browning, c) Dan Wesson, or d) James Revolver?'

In this chapter, Ram takes a train to Mumbai to meet Salim. He's carrying the money he got for working at the Taylor house. On the train, he meets the family and tells their son about the money. Their son, envious of Ram, tells the robbers about the money. Ram then kills one of the robbers to protect the beautiful daughter of the family. But the second robber escapes with his money. He killed him with a revolver that had the creator's name written on it.

Which is the highest award for gallantry given to the Indian armed forces? Is it a) Maha Vir Chakra, b) Param Vir Chakra, c) Shaurya Chakra or d) Ashok Chakra?

In this Chapter, the war begins between India and Pakistan. So Ram hides in the bunker. There's an old man tells of the heroic war stories that inspire everyone. From his stories, he knows the answer to the question.



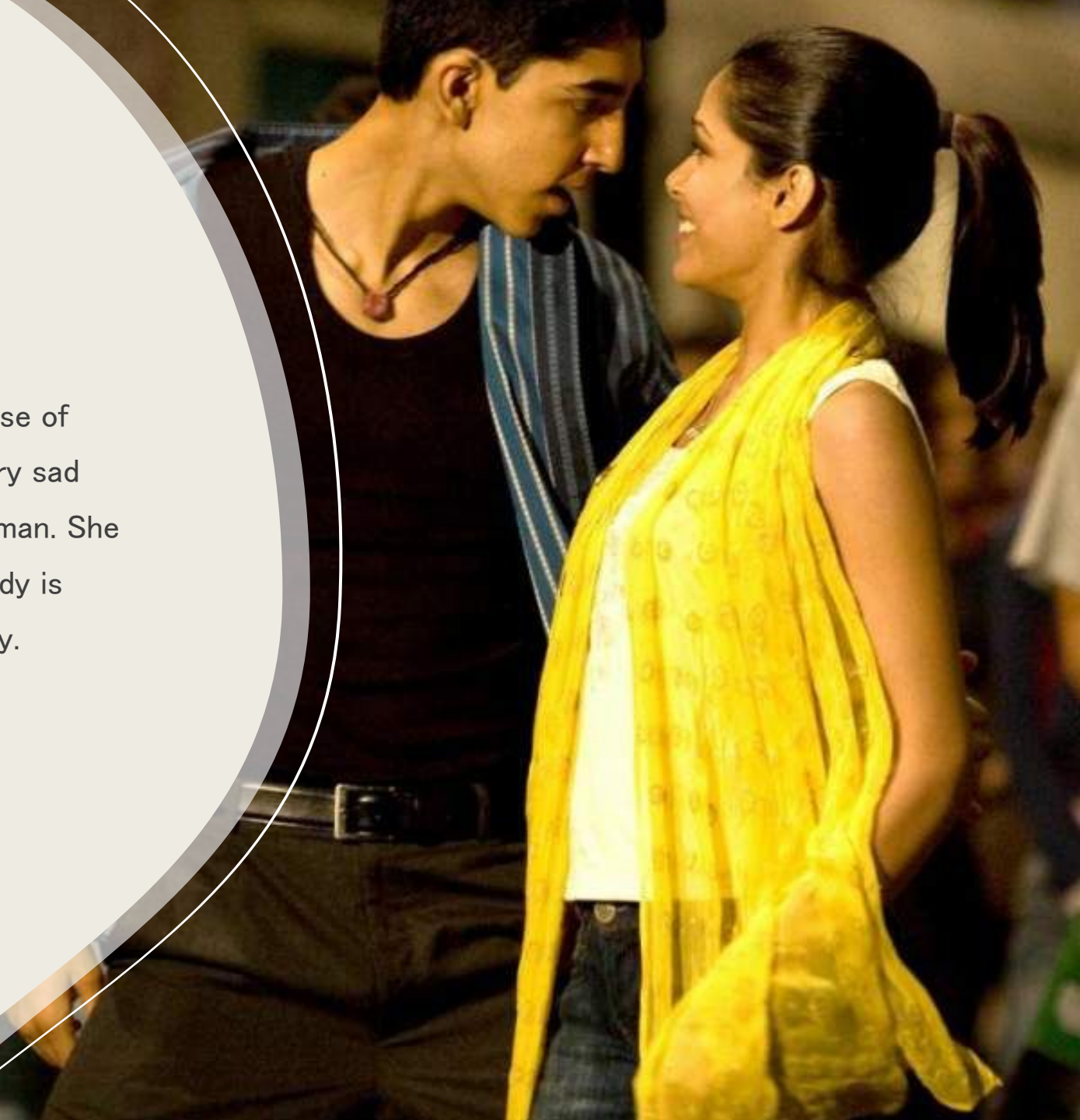
How many Test centuries has India's greatest batsman Sachin Malvankar scored? Your choices are a) 34, b) 35, c) 36 or d) 37?

Five years have passed since Ram and Salim last met. Salim tells Ram that he started acting in movies but only in small roles. Then he got a job at Ahmed's house. Who earned money by betting on Indian cricket matches and always won. Then he noticed strange things that Ahmed receives a yellow letter every week with a photo of a person and then after a while they talk about the death of this person in the news. And when Ahmed received a letter with a photo of the producer Salim, who promised to make Salim a star. He changed the photo to a photo of Maman who wanted to blind Salim and Ram.



Neelima Kumari, the Tragedy Queen, won the National Award in which year? Was it a) 1984, b) 1988, c) 1986 or d) 1985?

This chapter tells the story of Ram's work in the house of Neelima Kumari, a once-famous actress. She was very sad because she was beaten and injured by an unknown man. She commits suicide to stay beautiful forever. But her body is found only a few weeks later when it has become ugly.



in which one of Shakespeare's plays is there a character called Costard? Is it a) King Lear, b) The Merchant of Venice, c) Love's Labour's Lost or d) Othello?

In this chapter, Ram becomes an illegal guide. There he meets the prostitute Nita. She cannot leave the brothel because of her brother, who forces her to engage in prostitution. Nita's brother tells Ram that he can buy her back for 400,000 rupees. He steals this money from a woman, but gives this money to a man who has a sick son. Ram does not know the answer to this question but he finds a business card in his pocket of a man whose son was ill and calls him. The man thanks him for saving his son and gives him the correct answer.



Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 29, Opus 106, also known as the 'Hammerklavier Sonata', is in which key? Is it in a) B flat major, b) G minor, c) E flat major, or d) C Minor?

One last question. Ram doesn't know the answer to it. During the break, he wants to shoot the host because he found out that he was the one who beat up Neelima. He chooses an answer at random and wins the grand prize.



Epilogue

Ram finished the story he was telling his lawyer. The lawyer tells him that she is the girl who was beaten by her father and she went to the hospital. And she tells Ram that her father did not die then, but only broke his leg. Now she knows that Ram did not deceive her and helps him to free himself.



Differences between the film and the book

- In the film, the main character and Salim are siblings and grow up together, in the book they are friends and meet by chance in an orphanage. The bookish Salim is very different from Salim in the film: unlike the violent Salim in the film, in the book Salim is very kind and dreams of becoming an actor.
- The character of Latika is not in the book at all, but the prostitute Nita, with whom the main character falls in love, served as the prototype for Latika in the film.
- Many episodes were not included in the film, including the main character's work for the Australian ambassador, the film star Neelima Kumari.

