

Why I Write

by Raamesh Gowri Raghavan

People get addicted to many things — power, drugs, pornography. I'm the loony that's attracted to the sounds of tap-tapping away on a keyboard. I'm addicted to seeing words appear on a screen letter by letter, a magic in which magnetic codes slowly crystallise abstract thoughts into cold reality. Wordsmith is the name for me, words are my addiction.

Words are what I consume — reading hundreds of them in a day as I plod through blogs, newspaper columns, ads, tweets and Facebook status updates (very important reading nowadays). As Terry Pratchett said, they are to me what wood is to the carpenters. For from them I shape my own words — beat them, blend them, bash them, mash them, mix them, match them — into poems, short stories, essays, polemics, whatever. They don't have to be seen by anybody necessarily, they just have to exist.

I have a day job writing copy lines for a myriad ads. A day job that demands a two hour harried morning commute, weaving through traffic, running after buses, jumping into moving trains. includes approvals and disapprovals from bosses, meeting people you don't want to meet, smiling at strangers, running here and there, reading and understanding and digesting and screaming at briefs, doing and undoing paperwork, brainstorming, brain-draining, thinking, banging my head against the wall for that one great creative idea, for that one great selling line. And then going back home, too tired, too exhausted to do anything. To anything, but write, that is.

I write because I must. I'll die if I don't. Creep up behind me one day and prick my skin. I promise you won't draw blood — for it is ink that will spurt from my veins. The ink that creates for me - within office hours, while asleep, while eating, while surfing illegitimate

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sites — the stuff of a thousand stories. Like this pieces, stolen
between client meetings. It isn't just a passion. It's existence.

