



## COOKING THE BOOKS : February 2024

### Embrace the Chicken!

#### Channa Masala and Butter Chicken



Dear

Here are a couple of fab and favourite recipes!

First one is chana (chickpea) masala and the second is butter chicken. They're both very simple to make and you can even involve your kiddos!

Know where you'll find these recipes? At the back of my book :

[Embrace the Chicken](#) :)

Yup, you're going to have to get a copy from the library or your favourite bookstore. (Sneaky me!) I'm sure you can find a ton of recipes online *but* where will you find a heartwarming story, and two tried and tested recipes, all in a neat, slim package?

So embrace my chicken book, Friends! You'll love it!

## So, what's with all the chicken love?



*Orca currents*

**Mahtab  
Narsimhan**

# Embrace the Chicken

As an immigrant, my biggest challenge was to fit in. I'd opt for western outfits



over Indian, eat a cookie with my tea though I'd much prefer a samosa. Appearances were important and I didn't want to look like I was "FOTB." It's only after I got a job, settled down, and became comfortable in my own skin, in Canada, that I realized how *lucky* I was to have such a wonderful background, culture, and ethnicity.

**True story:** My son celebrated his fourth birthday in Canada. He started school here and integrated a lot faster than my husband and I. One of the things he always complained about, while in school, was the food. Why couldn't he have pizza and hotdogs all the time? Why did he have to eat boring curry, rice, kheema, and biryani? All his friends were eating the "good stuff" while he was stuck with the same Indian rubbish. Enough already! [This video](#) on Instagram encapsulates this so well. I literally was rolling on the floor.

Fast forward to when he started university at UBC. We were still in Toronto at the time. He stayed on campus the first year and had a meal plan which allowed him to eat all the "good stuff." During one of our calls, I heard the wistful tone in his voice when he said he missed my shrimp curry and rice, my spicy kheema, among other dishes.

Like any normal (Asian) mother (operative word being *Asian* ;)), I cooked and filled about 30 Tupperware with an assortment of his fave foods including said shrimp curry and kheema. I froze them and flew to BC with a suitcase full of food. The hotel we checked into had special instructions to give us an additional fridge/freezer in our room. The Tupperware were duly stored there, till I met my son on campus after class, where the containers were then transferred to his in-room chest freezer.

*Goes to show, never underestimate the power of food to make you think of home, and feel at home, no matter where you are!*

### **Embrace the Chicken: Synopsis**

Shivani only left Mumbai a few months ago.

But she isn't feeling like such an outsider anymore. She likes her new school and she finally has a best friend. But when her mother volunteers for the school's annual fundraiser, Shivani is sure she will completely embarrass her. Especially if she cooks one of the "stinky" dishes that Shivani loves but is too ashamed to eat in front of her friends.

On the day of the fair, the moment Shivani walks into the gym, she knows her worst fears have come true: the unmistakable scent of Indian spices is in the air. But then she sees that dozens of people are lined up at her mom's stall. It's the most popular one!

*Highly Recommended – CM Magazine – Issue 21/Feb 8, 2019*

*Short-listed – Chocolate Lily Book Awards – 2021*

*Recommended – CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens – 2019*

### **Reviews**

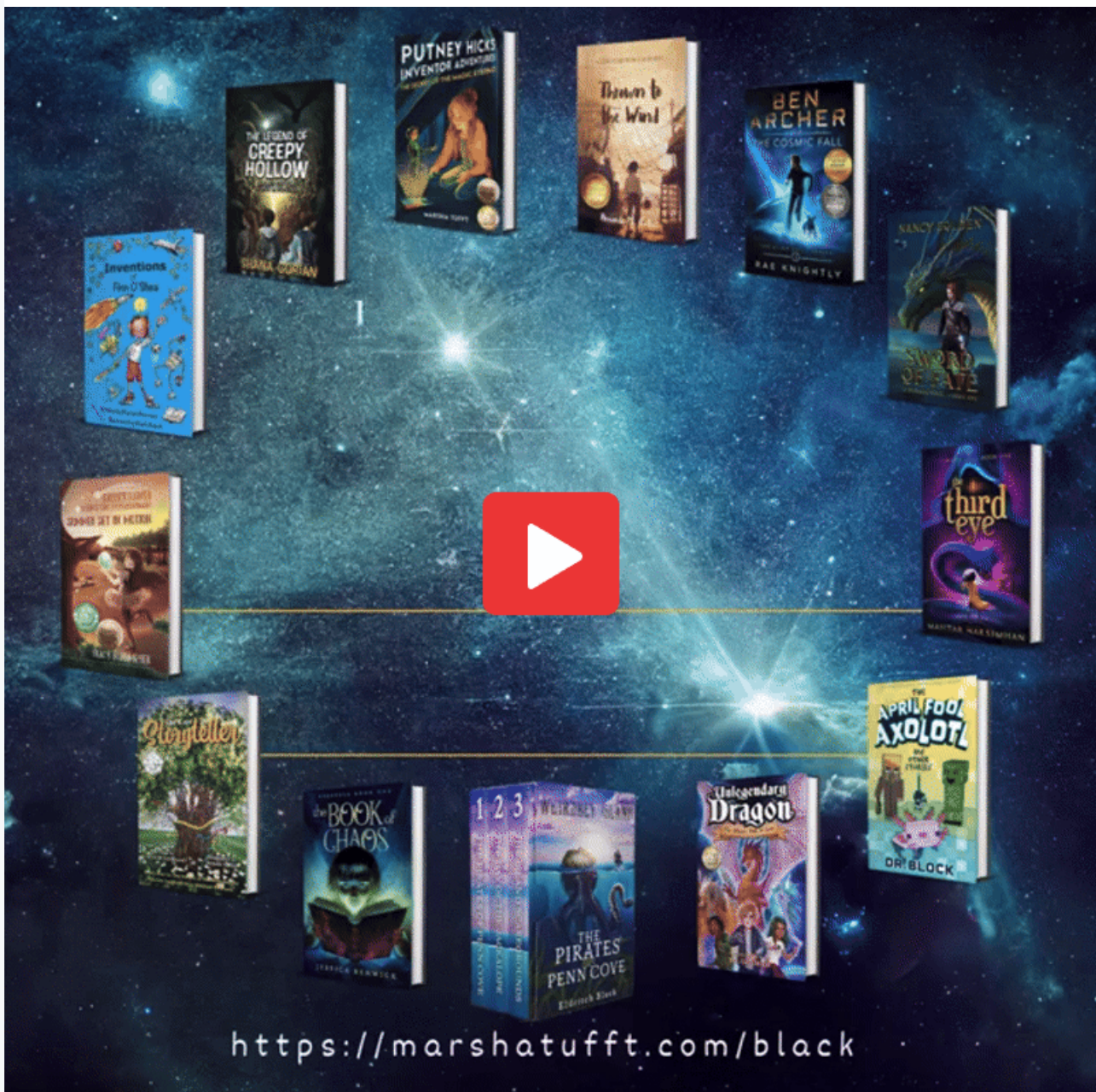
"Narsimhan presents an honest look at the dilemmas faced by teens as they transition from one culture to another, while simultaneously showing the strength of familial support and love. This quick read in the Orca Currents series is filled with angst tinged with humor and explores topics relevant to the lives of teens." – Booklist

"This is an honest, heartwarming story that any student will understand because teens need to fit in, cultural differences or not. Perhaps reading this well-written story will help teens support those who are different no matter what their differences may be." – CM: Canadian Review of Materials

Download a [WORD SEARCH](#) and [ANSWER KEY](#) plus a [DISCUSSION GUIDE](#) based on Embrace The Chicken here!

## Some more books to check out!

Some friends and I are offering books on sale at 99c or **free**! If you'd like to support me and buy a copy of The Third Eye, here's the link: <https://marshatufft.com/Narsim...>



# If you like EMBRACE THE CHICKEN, try these!

- Project Bollywood by Mahtab Narsimhan
- The Wherewood by Gabrielle Prendergast
- Haunted Hospital by Marty Chan
- Leon Levels Up by Paul Coccia
- World's Worst Parrot by Alice Kuipers

## Some final words...

Looking for chilling fantasy novels in an exotic settings within Asia, with a sprinkling of mythology and a side order of mystery?

Check out both these series by yours truly:

[EERIE TALES FROM THE EAST](#) (Goosebumps meets Asian mythology)

[THE TARA TRILOGY](#) (A quest, a mystery, and a fairy tale, all in one)

I'm on [BOOKBUB](#) and would love to connect with you there!

Please remember to [whitelist my email address](#).

I'm currently reading *The Comfort Book* by Matt Haig. Here's a lovely thought I'd like to leave with you:

**"Happiness occurs when you forget who you're expected to be. And what you're expected to do. Happiness is an accident of self-acceptance. It's the warm breeze you feel when you open the door to who you are."**

xo

Mahtab

### Stardust Stories

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Toronto, ON,  
Canada

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