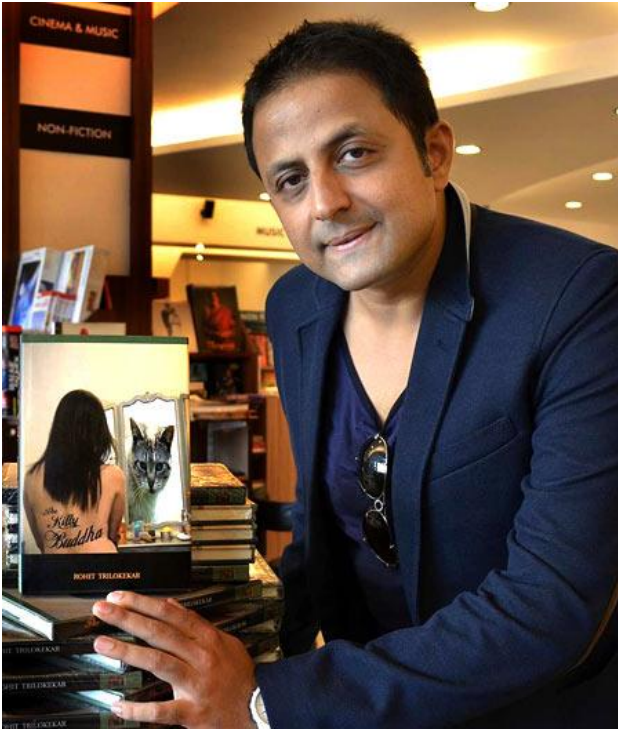


## The mystical world of a cat-philosopher

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**An exclusive excerpt from Rohit Trilokekar's book *The Kitty Buddha*.**

Rohit got his degrees in English Literature and Business Management and had a long career in sales before he decided enough was enough.

Now, his wife has to tolerate seeing her 38-year-old husband sitting at the breakfast table, typing away furiously on his MacBook while tolerating her son's constant demands for a cat. Instead *The Kitty Buddha* is about the closest thing the little fellow got from his dad.

And what's it about, you ask?

So the book is about cat's foray into the magical world of the metaphysical. As one delves deeper one comes to understand that the 'cat' is but a metaphor for the living, breathing thing that is inside all of us, call it the soul. This book is for everybody who seeks to look for meaning beyond the 'mundane'. Seasoned well with adult humour to provide just the right balance for your existential experience.

Guess Rohit Jr will have to wait tad longer before he lays his hands on this one.

Meanwhile, we have here an exclusive excerpt from *The Kitty Buddha*.

That statement did not make me doubt the sincerity of the love Tommy had for me. It only reconfirmed my faith in him that he knew something about life that I didn't. Something that I could learn. Everybody says, "Be in the moment". But even that very thought kills this very moment. But how can somebody not think? I mean, consider this. If you are meditating and are lost in the reverie of no thought, and somebody rings the doorbell, what are you supposed to do? Snap out of that quasi 'cat'atonic state and summon the thought to open that door or just remain in

your own world? What if it's Domino's pizza? Some things are better left ANSWERED I think. Still time for me to venture forth into the Himalayas.

Tommy and I just lay there in thoughtless serenity and watched the wonders of life unfold. A few bats flying by, the gentle sound of leaves rustling in the wind and of course, the beautiful cool air that kissed our cheeks every now and then. The sun went down to bed and so did we. You must be thinking, what does an uneducated cat know about things like the sun and the moon and the stars. The sun doesn't go to bed like this foolish cat thinks. But what if I think it does? Doesn't that make it true? The only place anything exists is in the mind right? If you want to create your own fairytale it's not akin to delusion. You call people schizophrenic but what about you? You have your Eureka moments too, right, like that chap Newton. Now can anybody explain to me that when a thought like that concerning the law of gravity pops into the man's head, why isn't it categorized as an uncontrolled thought, and hence what makes it different from schizophrenia? I mean, the thought just popped out of nowhere right? Do we think our thoughts or do they just come from nowhere?

I woke up at 3 A.M. My lover boy was still asleep. I had this sudden rush of hunger. Now, I'm not complaining, but if I were at Farukh's all I had to do was saunter across to the kitchen and topple over the half-empty can of fish crackers (yes, Farukh was generous enough to leave it on the marble kitchen platform for my midnight snack) with a dainty little jump and happily lick them off the floor and into my mouth. When I say fish crackers I mean crackers seasoned with fish flavor.

I like my cookies and milk, skimmed though it is, and they happen to constitute a major portion of my diet, which, happily as I have been conditioned to be, is vegetarian. Now you must be thinking... Cat... and vegetarian? No way. Well, I have been tempted on numerous occasions to devour the local mouse, Squeaky, but all my attempts to do so have gone down the drain. Well, that still makes me vegetarian right? I don't know about you, but I believe some humans are vegetarian too. What about those that aren't? Have you ever wondered sometimes when you are driving your car and your eyes flash upon dozens of helpless, frightened chickens locked up in cages in the back of a slaughter van, and you zoom onto one in particular, 'does that chicken have a name?'

If it did, if it were named Deepak, for instance, would that make you feel the slightest bit of repulsion towards the horrific act about to be performed? Does not having a name make it simpler for you to eat that chicken? Would 'Deepak' survive the horrendous fate then, if we would just look at him and go, "Oh. That's Deepak. Maybe not Deepak Chopra but a Deepak, nonetheless. A Deepak that lives and breathes like all of us. He's not like other chicken. Look. He even has that unusual swagger. Let's take him home as a pet, shall we?". Does having no name then have the reverse effect? Does it make it a 'thing'? You have a name. A first name. A last name. An 'identity'. Does that give you the right to be spared the same fate?

Have you ever thought, when you sit in your best clothes and your Jimmy Choos, that the Peking Duck so extravagantly laid out on the plate in front of you, is nothing but a glorified carcass? That duck had a family that loved him, probably as much as your family loves you, and all it wanted was to live its life with all the enthusiasm that you just displayed when you picked it off the menu in "Chef's Specials". The ironic part is, the duck was christened after its death, like it was a martyr to a cause, the cause of 'your hunger'...

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**Image:** Rohit Trilokekar during The Kitty Buddha's launch in Mumbai

**Photographs:** Rohit Troilokekar