

For the better of verse

Debutant author Ashwini Kumar Rath's first book sheds light on modern-day complexities

POOJA PRABBHAN

Q Author Ashwini Kumar Rath's debut book *Rising Petals* is a collection of poems that is published by Notion Press. In his verses, Ashwini Kumar uses a myriad of objects, moods, places and phenomena to touch upon modern-day anxieties and the perpetual conflicts in our minds, finding ways to strengthen our resolve to stay true to our elements.

Q Was there an interesting incident or episode that egged you to write an anthology?

My poems echo everything that is happening around us. They were penned based on my perspectives, and so it mirrors what I continue to see around me — in our society.

At some level, I believe everybody feels sensitised to all the significant noises around, with a little substance hidden somewhere. I'd also like to believe that *Rising Petals* assuages the

uncertainty in the reader's mind. But then, we can experience the essence only if we do not surrender to a herd mentality.

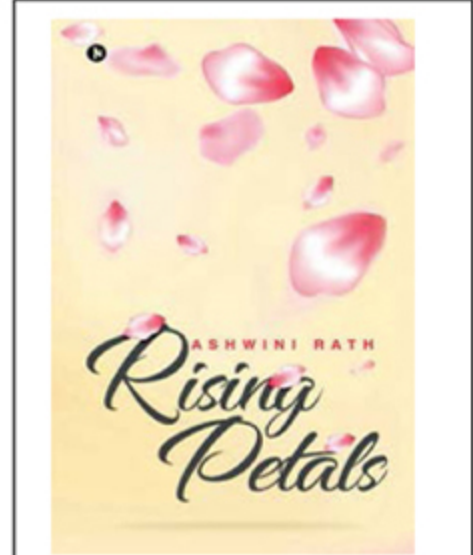
Q Does this book mirror any of your personal experiences, or is it pertinent to the pandemic era?

The disruption in personal and social lives has become a norm. We are braced with future shock and are trying our best to ascertain the impact and to devise our strategy of survival.

What always inspires me that human civilisation is a continuum that absorbs any disruption and lays a new path and a new order. When we are transiting from the past to the present continually, we get just an instant, which we call the present, to live on our own accord and on our own terms. This is where we should seek our opportunities and solace. Living in harmony with Nature is a lesson that humanity has learnt a number of times in the past, yet we forget this truth until we are reminded. Romancing with the natural world around us is one of the threads I have tried to emulate in my poems.

To get this going and completed, did you face a writer's block at any instance?

My habit of journaling since childhood has helped me a great deal, in terms of overcoming a writer's block. But there have been times, spanning over one or more weeks, when I stop writing anything — I even do not write a good email or type a text message. It's a break from everything —



Title: *Rising Petals*
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Pages: 92 pages

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looking at things as they are. Then it takes a whole lot of effort — a struggle with the self for almost a day — to come back to the old habit and to go 'normal'.

Q What's your suggestion to young authors?

Write. This will be the single most important thing for an author. But then understanding the nuances of the language is also needed; this can be acquired with continual reading. To contribute substance to your readers, you need to observe the world around you, question messages around you. And last but not the least, stay true to yourself while you write.

Q What's the next we can look forward to from you?

I am currently working on my next project and I hope to come up with a new book in the coming quarter.

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