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Clarion Review

Self-Help

Tonic for Great Life: Are You Ready for the Leap?
Kiran Kurwade
PartridgeIndia
978-1-4828-1020-2
Four Stars (out of Five)

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The easiest way to describe *Tonic for Great Life*, an intriguing and somewhat puzzling book, is to call it an exercise in either spiritual philosophy or philosophical spirituality. The juxtaposition of words is quite intentional, since word reversal, word rhyme, word analysis, and word play are all part of the author's unusual writing style.

The book is steeped in a life philosophy that builds up the individual, encourages self-awareness, promotes lifelong learning, celebrates uniqueness, and appreciates the wholeness of intellect, emotion, body, and spirit. With its strong spiritual foundation, this is a work that could very well make one think about the fundamental meaning of life. That is essentially what author Kiran Kurwade means by "tonic"; he writes, "Tonic for the soul or transforming your Good Life to Great Life is knowing the truth in totality, which includes your unique strengths (Great Gifts) and utilizing them in Great Spirit."

Kurwade is skilled at expressing himself in language that is poetic and enticing. In fact, he uses and analyzes words in a unique way. The following are a few of the phrases he employs in his book: "The moment you conquer your inner rival is the moment of self-revival"; "God is nowhere or God is now here"; "Every Stone can be a Milestone"; "Invisible doesn't mean not visible but in-visible (visible inside)"; and "Any Role without Goal is like a Body without Soul."

At the close of each chapter, Kurwade includes "Good Morning Tonic," a collection of sayings such as the ones above, followed by a space for the reader to write his or her own tonic. These tonics are then reprised at the end of the book so the reader has a complete collection of them, all in one place.

Another intriguing element of the text is Kurwade's excellent use of black-and-white photography. Each high-quality photograph seems perfectly matched to one of the author's philosophical tonics. In addition, the interior pages are well-designed and the fanciful cover image is stunning.

Yet this book can also be puzzling. Some of the writing is difficult to comprehend; for example, "Illusion is 'ill Vision'—when our vision becomes ill, it creates an illusion. However we remain unaware of this illusion, and turn into Happy Slaves." Kurwade's play on words doesn't always work; at times, it feels forced and overdone. The chapters, each of which is a tonic (for example, "Tonic for Great Learner," "Tonic for Great Purpose," and "Tonic for a Great Leader") are only loosely connected, making the volume seem somewhat disjointed. Finally, there is an Eastern spirituality to the book (it was published in India) that might not be fully appreciated by Western readers.

Still, for the reader who is looking to explore his or her inner self, gain spiritual enlightenment, and be entertained by a writer who has a novel way of expressing himself, *Tonic for Great Life* is a good choice.

Barry Silverstein