

World Parrot Day: Celebrating Nature's Most Colourful Communicators

Observed on May 31, World Parrot Day highlights the beauty, intelligence and conservation needs of parrots across the globe. Known for their vibrant feathers and remarkable ability to mimic human speech, parrots play an important role in forest ecosystems by helping disperse seeds and maintain biodiversity. However, habitat loss, illegal wildlife trade and climate change have pushed many parrot species towards endangerment. The day raises awareness about responsible pet ownership and the need to protect natural habitats. By supporting conservation efforts and discouraging illegal trade, people can help ensure that these charismatic birds continue to thrive in the wild.



When Glitterati Met Literati



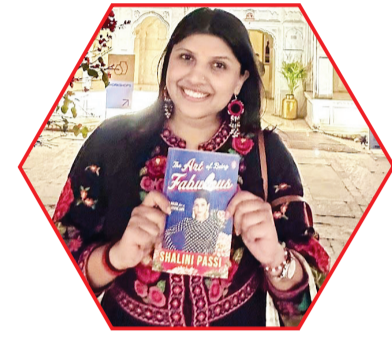
"You know what I realised that the camera doesn't lie, so, it caught the bit of honesty, the genuineness that I have. The camera caught that and early in life, these 'nuskas' you know, Delhi is the capital of Jugaad. We have a solution for everything. We think we are doctors, we think we are lawyers, we think we are plumbers. We are everything. If somebody can do it, a professional can do it, Delhi people can do it better. So, that chip of Delhi I have on my shoulder: I can do everything. 'Mai khud sab kar sakti hun.' And two days ago, I met this Chef Vikas Khanna. He was here from New York. And he said, my dentist showed me your clip and said, this is, if you want to drink coffee, please drink coffee with a straw. And the entire dentist community has actually passed that video on to so many of their people who would come regularly for cleaning and stuff like that. So, I came up with all these things about self-preservation because that's what it was, just the need to set this up in my own way."



Art of Being Fabulous with a Shalini Passi fan at the City Palace.



Reader holds The Art of Being Fabulous at Jaipur Inn, Jaipur.



Reader holds The Art of Being Fabulous at City Palace, Jaipur



A reader poses with The Art of Being Fabulous at JLF.



A reader holds The Art of Being Fabulous at Jaipur Literature Festival.



A reader holds The Art of Being Fabulous at City Palace, Jaipur.



An attendee holds The Art of Being Fabulous book.



Puspendra Bhargava (Owner of Jaipur Inn)

From Netflix visibility to method, from viral 'nuskas' to self-preservation, from camera fear to advice for school girls and from celebrity gossip to everyday boundaries. Jaipur knows how to meet celebrities without surrendering its curiosity. In this conversation, Mehta's questions don't just flatter Shalini Passi into applause, they keep pulling her back to authorship: Why this book? Why now? What stays real when the camera arrives? And once the audience enters, the room reveals its full range: compliments that are really requests, and curiosity that really is about survival, confidence, boundaries, work and the pressure of being watched.

A quick note for readers arriving through streaming culture: She starred in *Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives* (2024), the third season of the popular Netflix reality show *The Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives* which leans into a Delhi vs Mumbai framing.

Ruchika Mehta: You can't watch *Fabulous Lives vs Bollywood*



Shalini Passi seated on stage alongside the moderator during the ongoing discussion at the Jaipur Literature Festival.

Wives, the third season, without feeling it belongs to you. How has life changed after that?

Shalini Passi: "Thank you. Before, like, Karan said to me that you're famous, have you become stuck up? So, I said to Karan, I was always stuck up. I was always arrogant but now, when I see people who do know me, people from all walks of life and they're showering so much love, affection on me, I feel more humbled today because, you know, if the audience or the people or the leader is getting something from me, they're getting inspiration. What I'm getting from them is love, and that has actually become the wind beneath my wings. So, they are giving me much more than I am giving them. So, it's like a give and take with me and the audience. So, for me, what they give me has enriched my life. I'm really grateful for that."

Ruchika Mehta: You call yourself arrogant, yet so much love surrounds you. Why do people get attracted to you?

Shalini Passi: "Well, because honestly, for me, I work. I do think for myself. So, I think there's a genuine effort, like if I want to wear something or if I want to do something, or my love for arts or design or passion, it is because I want to do it, not because I was told to."

Book excerpt: "To me, fabulousness is a form of self-trust, one that begins with how you see yourself, not how the world sees you."

Ruchika Mehta: How did this

"fabulous series" translate into a book?

Shalini Passi: "So, after the success of the series, a couple of publishing houses reached out to me and just out of respect, instead of writing to them, saying that my English is very basic and I don't think I have much to say, and my ideas are very homebaked, and it's just me. I actually got on a call with somebody from Penguin and I said, listen, I'm really honoured if you think that I can author a book. But honestly, I have not achieved much and I have very less to say. Like, there's not much that I think makes a difference and they explained to me: whatever I said made sense and I decided not to shoot for about the time that I was writing the book and I just got on with it. We have this book which has 10 rules for a beautiful life and that's how it started."

Book excerpt: "Every chapter is a doorway; think of it as an invitation."

Ruchika Mehta: Passi's 'nuskas' have travelled further than she expected, sometimes into places as specific as a dentist's clinic.

Shalini Passi: "You know what I realised that the camera doesn't lie, so, it caught the bit of honesty, the genuineness that I have. The camera caught that and early in life, these 'nuskas' you know, Delhi is the capital of Jugaad. We have a solution for everything. We think we are doctors, we think we are lawyers, we think we are plumbers. We are everything. If somebody can do it, a professional can do it, Delhi people can do it better. So, that chip of Delhi I have on my shoulder: I can do everything. 'Mai khud sab kar sakti hun.'"

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So, I came up with all these things about self-preservation because that's what it was, just the need to set this up in my own way."

Book excerpt: "Fabulousness isn't something you wait to be given... it is a frequency."

Ruchika Mehta: You've spoken

#PERSONA



Shalini Passi signs copies after the session at Jaipur Literature Festival.

about camera fear and stage hesitation. What shifted that you accepted a Netflix reality series?

Shalini Passi: "Growing up in school, I really enjoyed dancing and I did have some sort of presence. But I was very scared of the camera because I thought I looked better in person than I looked in camera. I felt my nose looked very big on camera, in reality as well, and I thought my voice sounded like a child's voice."

So, for the longest time, I used to be very conscious of my voice and the way I looked on camera. In 2018, I started on this journey where I said, you know, I have to get over the phobia of the camera because the times had changed."

Then, I wanted to do a travel show with a big OTT platform. So, to get out of the situation, I started getting photographs. I started shooting a lot, all over India, from Leh, Ladakh, Pondicherry, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Dharamshala. That actually never materialised because the networks felt that I needed a larger audience.

Shalini Passi: "I share everything. In fact, my team told me not to share everything, but I said I like to."

Audience member: On the show, others were gossiping about you and teaming up. How does it feel that the whole world talks about you?

Shalini Passi: "I'm used to it. There are four stages of loving Shalini Passi. First is disbelief. First is shock and disbelief, and it goes on and on. So, when they reach ultimate surrender, then, I talk to them because they've surrendered to everything that I'm doing."

In fact, the friend who made the four stages made another stage. He said, I cannot take it anymore. You're always running off doing something, so, I can't handle the drama anymore. He says, I'm not going to be friends with you. So, the fifth stage was: you run.

And then, he made a sixth stage: you come back because everybody else is of no substance. So, now there are six stages."

If the straw is self-preservation, the swan is discipline: how is the visible surface of invisible work?

Audience member: I'm a huge fan, you're graceful, ambitious, and a philanthropist. How do you balance it all?

Shalini Passi: "Obviously, you've seen a swan, right? You've seen a swan floating on the lake beautifully, looking peaceful. Under the water, she's travelling very, very fast. So, I just thought to myself that if my hard work shows on me, I will stop working. The day that struggle comes on to me, not just physically, but in a way that my behaviour is not graceful or generous or becoming, I will stop working."

Because I want to be like a swan who's working very hard and still the anxiety, insecurity, whatever is not coming on. So, I visualise myself as that swan."

Audience member: You've been in the media eye for so long. How do you set boundaries when people cross them?

Shalini Passi: "Well, it takes years and years to maintain boundaries. You have to tell people that the work that you are doing is important. Whatever you are doing, it could be something big or something small."

I always say that a housewife's work is never done. Because she'd come back from her work, take care of the children, and then if there's a

Audience member: You say authenticity is your path. But for normal people, staying authentic brings opposition. Confidence drops. You end up wearing a mask. What do you do?

Shalini Passi: "You know when you get a new pair of jeans, you take time to get into the fit, right? People will get used to what you give them. They will accept you. So, I think it's slowly but surely, if you say, this is what I'm going to do and this is what I need to do to remain sane with my family and friends, they will accept it."

Audience member: What intimidates Shalini?

Shalini Passi: "Somebody who is extremely highly educated. I get intimidated by people who are very educated because I only did my graduation, and after that, I'm self-taught. If I know somebody has done a PhD and then MBA, I go like, oh my God, what am I going to say? I get intimidated by that. By education, but it is important and I admire people who are educated because it takes a lot of discipline, to give a certain number of years of your life to study"



storm, she would be the one who would go and check the kundi on the balcony.

So, I think boundaries are most important because you have to tell your family and friends: this is my work, and it is important to me. It might not seem important to you, but what I do is important to me. And it takes time but I think it all comes with a story. Asserting yourself in a nice way, you know?"

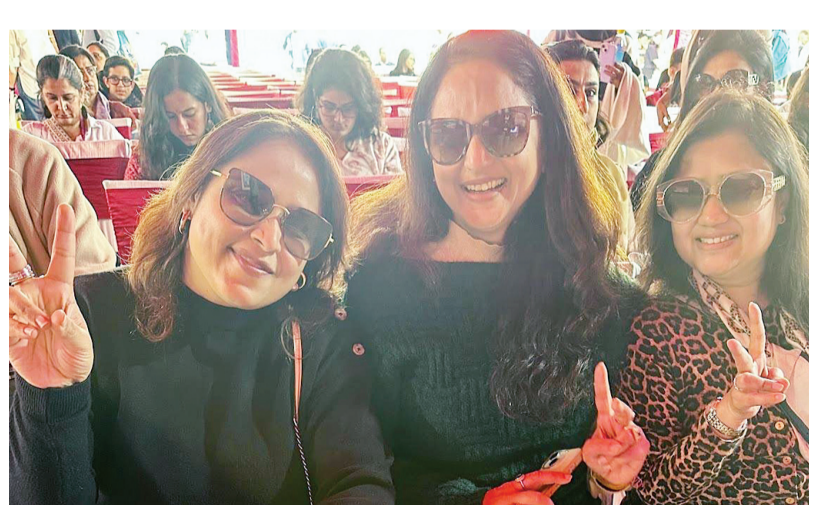
When school girls ask about confidence and camera fear, she begins where Indian families begin: parents, perspective, and the unreality of Instagram.

Audience member: What advice would you to give school girls who struggle to face the camera and express themselves?

Shalini Passi: "I think the most important thing is that you have to love your parents. You have to listen to your parents. They have seen the world. And being honest, our generation has seen a lot. We've seen a black and white television turn to colour. The television turned into a phone, Instagram. So, we have seen everything."

Sorry, biggest advice: you have to listen to your parents. They know better, and there is nobody who loves you more, and they have sacrificed their lives.

And you cannot measure beauty by what you see on Instagram. Those pictures take hours to click and then hours to edit. The lighting is perfect. They're professional. It's



Audience members at the book launch and conversation session at Jaipur Literature Festival.

#FREDERICK BANTING

The Night That Changed Medicine Forever

Leonard's blood sugar levels dropped dramatically. He recovered. For the first time in history, diabetes was no longer an immediate death sentence



John Macleod, Charles Best, Frederick Banting, James Collip.

In October 1920, a young doctor in Ontario sat late into the night reading a paper on the pancreas. He was 29, relatively unknown, and had little research experience. Yet, one sentence in that paper stopped him cold, it sparked an idea that would soon transform modern medicine. That doctor was Frederick Banting, and his insight would lead to the discovery of insulin.

At the time, a diagnosis of Type 1 Diabetes was essentially a death sentence. Patients, often children, could only be kept alive briefly through extreme starvation diets. Banting believed the pancreas held the key, and he took his idea to John Macleod at the University of Toronto. Despite Banting's lack of research credentials, Macleod gave him a small lab and a young medical student assistant, Charles Best.

What followed was months of relentless work. Banting and Best struggled through long days and longer nights, isolating pancreatic extracts and refining their methods. By January 1922, they were ready for a human trial. Their patient was Leonard Thompson, a 14-year-old boy dying of diabetes.

The first injection failed, triggering an allergic reaction. But Banting didn't give up. With the help of biochemist James Collip, they refined the extract. Two weeks later, they tried

again. This time, Leonard's blood sugar levels dropped dramatically. He recovered. For the first time in history, diabetes was no longer an immediate death sentence, it was a manageable condition. The breakthrough was monumental, but what came next was just as remarkable. In 1923, Banting, Best, and Collip secured patents for insulin and its production method. The discovery had the potential to generate unimaginable wealth. Instead, they made a decision that still stands as

one of the most ethical acts in medical history: they sold the rights to the University of Toronto for just one dollar each. Their reasoning was simple, insulin belonged to the world. The university then licensed the patent to pharmaceutical companies, ensuring it could be mass-produced and distributed at low cost. It was a model built on accessibility, not profit.

Frederick Banting would not live to see the full global impact of his work; he died tragically in a plane crash in 1941. Yet, his legacy endures in every life saved by insulin.

And still, the story carries a difficult irony. Today, more than 500 million people worldwide live with diabetes. Despite insulin's century-old discovery, access remains uneven. A handful of major pharmaceutical companies control the majority of global supply, and in some parts of the world, patients are forced to ration doses, or go without, because of cost.

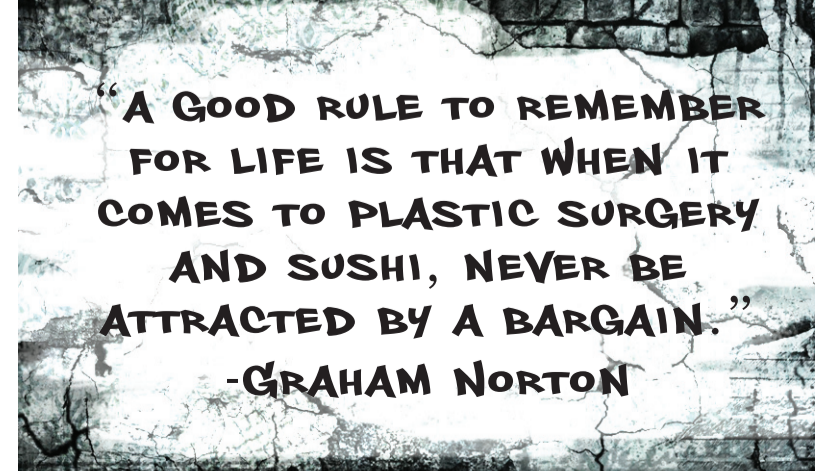
The discovery of insulin was a triumph of science and humanity, born from a single moment of curiosity on a quiet October night. But it also serves as a reminder: breakthroughs alone are not enough. How they are shared with the world defines their true legacy.



insulin Injection



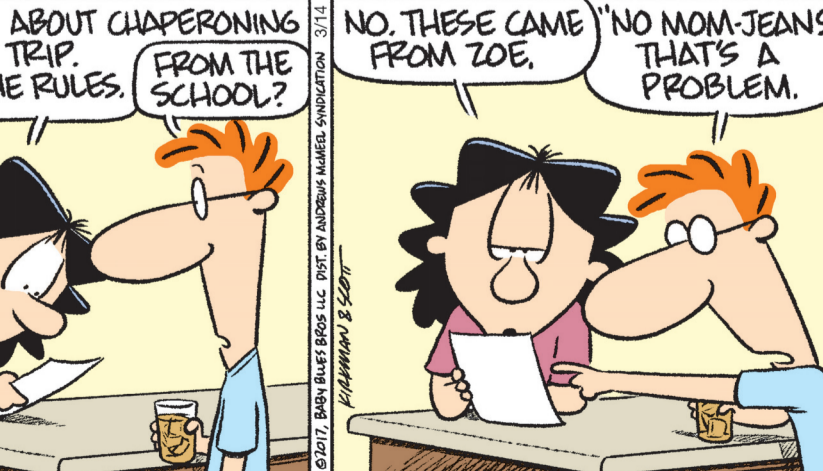
THE WALL



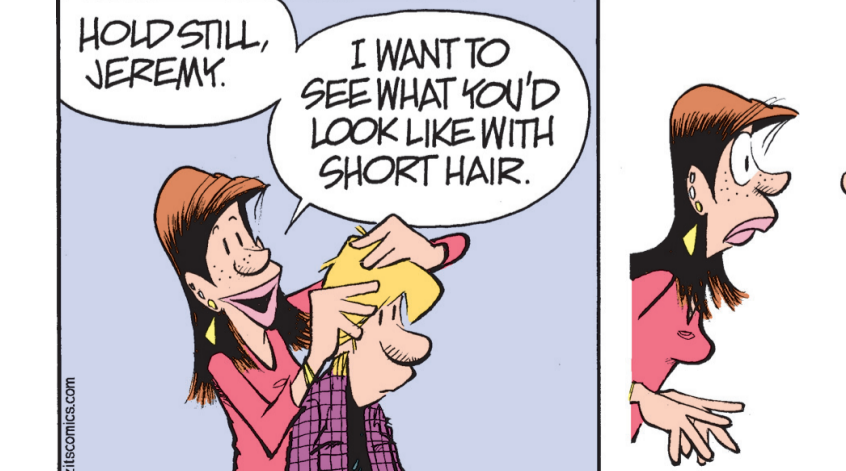
BABY BLUES



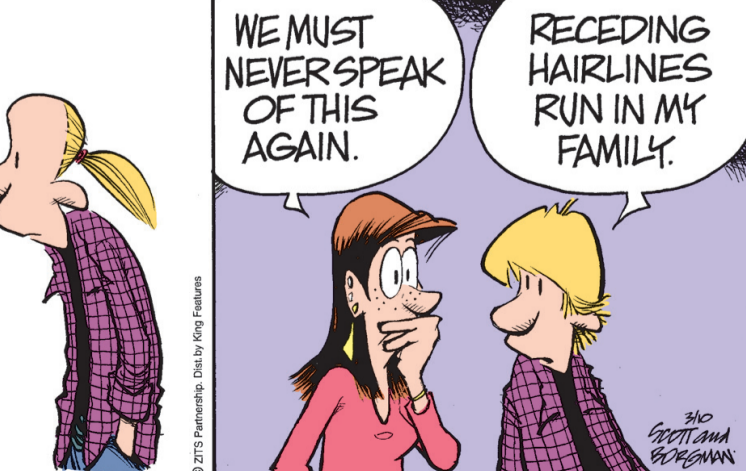
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By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

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