



## **The Truth About Me—A Hijra Life Story - Book Review**

**Name of the Book: The Truth About Me—A Hijra Life Story**

**Author: A. Revathi**

**Reviewed by:**

**Dr. A. Arun Daves**

Assistant Professor,  
Department of English,  
Jawahar Science College,  
Neyveli, Tamil Nadu, India - 607803

Sexual minorities the world over keep on enduring different types of bias and separation because of the state and the more extensive society even in nations where they are legitimately perceived and their privileges are ensured by law. In India, where these minorities are not considered to exist at any rate lawfully their frightening situation stays obscure to the hetero larger part who, regardless, stay, overall, uninterested as well as even tenaciously unfriendly to them. Not many individuals from India's sexual minority networks gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and hijras or the 'third sex' dare, because of a paranoid fear of being despised and much more terrible, to stand up and be freely distinguished, leave the alone battle for their privileges and the foul play and biases that they are spooky with for the duration of their lives. Sexual orientation rights activists and some basic freedoms bunches have as of late started directing their concentration toward these networks, and that to truly be told, haltingly.

This book appreciates the uncommon qualification of being the principal book at any point to have been composed by an Indian hijra. In her self-portrayal, Revathi, presently an unmistakable hijra rights extremist with a sexual minority NGO situated in Bangalore, describes the detestations of her turbulent, dread-filled life. Conceived a male in a laborer group of unassuming methods in a town in Tamil Nadu, Doraisamy (as he was named by his folks) found as numerous gay men do in youth itself that he was altogether different from different young men of his town. At school, he avoided young men's games, liking to play with young ladies and sprucing up like a lady in his mom's garments. As the years cruised by, rather than his 'ladylike' ways falling aside, as his folks had trusted, Doraisamy progressively started to feel that he was a young lady, albeit caught, for no deficiency of his own, inside a male body. Furthermore, the more 'female' he dressed and acted the more he was provoked by his friends at school and his folks and kin at home. He had nobody to impart his agonies to work finally



he met a gathering of youthful gay men in a town close to his town. Interestingly, he found that he was in good company in this world, not by any means the only kid who felt and acted like a young lady. From these men, he found that it was for sure workable for a kid to turn into a young lady, or, all the more definitely, a hijra a eunuch.

In his late adolescents, Doraisamy escaped his home, unfit to bear the steady tortures that he needed to experience the ill effects of his family and neighbors. He took a train to Delhi, where he wound up in a world unique concerning his little Tamil town. There he met a gathering of hijras, who encouraged him. He started living as an individual from the hijra family, noticing the different ceremonies and customs explicit to the hijra local area which the book portrays in perplexing point of interest. At last, the head or master of the hijra family consented to start him into the local area or, at the end of the day, to make him her chela or pupil by permitting him to have his male sexual organs eliminated. There are two different ways to do this: either by a specialist who does a careful extraction in a medical clinic or by a hijra dai utilizing a crude and agonizing technique. The last is hazardous, and can even here and there be deadly, however, men who become hijras as such are agreed more prominent regard in the hijra local area. Doraisamy picked the previous. The activity was short and quick, yet at the same time agonizingly difficult, and inside two hours Doraisamy was changed into the 'lady' he generally needed to be or, to be more exact, the 'lady' he generally felt and even knew, he was. Dedicated Revathi by her master, she presently turned into an undeniable individual from the hijra local area, not, at this point simply a Kothi, a delicate male.

Revathi had trusted that once she transformed into a 'lady', or a hijra, she would finally find a sense of contentment with herself. However, she before long found, life as a hijra was extreme, even pitiless. She depicts in difficult detail the ignoble life in her master's home, the consistent fights with her gurubais, individual hijra followers of her master, who are physically and financially misused by the last mentioned, the dangers and savagery from men in the roads, the maltreatments she needed to continually experience the ill effects of outsiders for being a hijra, an authentic pariah, the urgent neediness that most hijras need to confront because nobody will utilize them. She took to accomplishing carpentry work, singing, and moving at individuals' homes in the event of a birth or a marriage, a custom, presently quickly ceasing to exist, that concurred a proportion of regard to hijras in customary Indian culture. Yet, what she procured from this work was small, barely adequate to get by. Immediately, she joined a gathering of individual hijras to go from one shop to another requesting cash and food, yet there she needed to fight with determined badgering and a steady blast of affronts.



In the interim, she found her sexual longings as a 'lady' yet before long understood that even though she longed for an ordinary 'life' as a wedded 'lady', no man could at any point accept her as his significant other. At long last, she was constrained, in the same way as other hijras, to take to sex work to endure and in the desire for at last discovering the adoration for a man. She moved to Mumbai, where she took up with a hijra family, turning into the chela of a hijra master who headed a group of sex-laborers, the two ladies just as hijras.

Life as a hijra sex-laborer, which Revathi portrays as an agonizing point of interest, is severe. She discusses the terrible debasement that she needed to endure on account of individual hijras and their masters just as intoxicated men and the police. Pulled to a police headquarters, she is fiercely attacked physically. A boisterous assault on her and burglarizes her small belongings. A lot of hooligans take steps to execute her. She looks for asylum in bars and turns into an urgent consumer. Life as a hijra is one endless arrangement of tortures, and the man she had envisioned would one day discover her and accept her as his life partner never enters her life. At last, unfit to bear her terrible reality anymore, she gets away and returns home to her town, anticipating that her family should comfort her. Once there, nonetheless, she understands that she is dead taking everything into account. The disdain that she meets at their hands is not less torturing than what she needed to endure as a sex specialist in Mumbai. She remains in her town for a couple of months, yet at this point, she has fostered the inward certainty to retaliate. At the point when individuals affront her, she no longer remaining parts quiet as she used to. A hijra is likewise a person, deserving of regard, she answers back and discloses to her abusers to lay off.

A significant defining moment in Revathi's life happens when, after moving from her town to Bangalore, where she works for a period selling her body, she meets with activists of an NGO working for equity of sexual minorities. The NGO extends to her an employment opportunity, which, however humbly paid, she takes up to at last get away from the merciless life as a sex laborer. She gets going as a peon of sorts, doing unspecialized temp jobs in the workplace, however, her coarseness and insight win her more prominent duties in the association, where she starts to understand that a substitute life is undoubtedly feasible for individuals like her. She goes to lobbyist gatherings and peruses writing about hijras such as herself, where she discovers that hijras, as other minimized networks, can and should support their privileges. They merit similar rights as every other person, she presently knows: to be perceived by the state as equivalent residents, to have apportioned cards, to cast a ballot and represent races, to consider and be appropriately utilized, towed and receive kids, and to be



liberated from disdain, contempt, and bias. She starts activating her individual hijras on these lines.

Revathi's newly discovered euphoria, of being freed from asking and sex-work that is constrained on hijras by society that denies them some other methods for business, and of working for her own local area ends up being fleeting, notwithstanding. Both her master and her own chela are discovered killed, in independent occurrences both fall terrible casualties to merciless hooligans. To add to her wretchedness, the man who professes to be sexually unbiased who weds her, a lobbyist in the NGO she works with, deserts her a few months despite his past callings of adoration for her and regardless of her significant devotion to him. She finds, regrettably, that she is currently in isolation on the planet. Rather than collapsing and surrendering, notwithstanding, she challenges the substantial chances that she faces. She does this by choosing to think of her life account, to advise the world about the existence of hijras, and to demand that society and the state should give them their due.

This book capably interpreted from the Tamil by V. Geetha, a prominent Chennai-based women's activist is provocative and holding, and, simultaneously, striking. All through the book, as Revathi depicts her dread-filled life, she doesn't argue for feeling sorry for, however. All she asks is for others to perceive and treat hijras as individual people, with similar expectations and wants as every other person. The candor and dauntlessness with which she examines even the most 'private' parts of her life as a hijra the subtleties of her sex-change activity, her sexual experiences with her clients, the fierce rape by the police, etc is striking and excellent. Her evaluation of social developments of sexual orientation and predominant ideas of manliness deprived of hypothetical language, and, correctly along these lines, clear and convincing is an incredible supplication for us to profoundly re-consider being male and female simultaneously as it urges us to look for the third way of rising above the inflexible paired division among male and female and work towards a thought of humanness past or more sex as routinely comprehended.

### **Bio – Note:**

Dr. A. Arun Daves hails from Thenkuthu, a small village near Neyveli, Tamilnadu, India. He was raised in a small mining family. He attended St. Joseph's College, Cuddalore, where he pursued B.A. and M.A. in English Literature. He obtained his M.A. Linguistics degree from Annamalai University and M.Phil. in English from PRIEST University. He attained his Ph.D. degree in 2021 on the thesis entitled "Society and the Individual A Critical Study of John Galsworthy's Plays" from Annamalai University. He has an additional master's



degree in Linguistics. He has published research papers in various reputed refereed and UGC-approved international research journals and He had also reviewed few papers for journals. Presently working as a Assistant Professor in English at Jawahar Science College, Neyveli.