

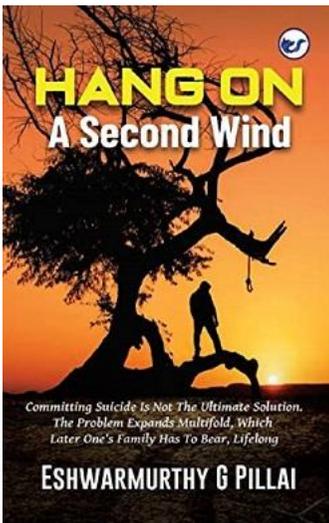
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Book Review on Eshwarmurthy G Pillai's 'Hang on: A Second Wind'

Dr. Anmol

Suicide a thin line between life and death, one who sees it, doesn't cross it who doesn't see it, crosses it."

The story illustrates the present-day phenomenon of farming in central India which has been a chief concern for authority time and again. The book has been divided into fifteen chapters. The opening of the story illustrates the backdrop of its protagonist Subodh Kadale. The severe drought and famine induce a young farmer Subodh Kadale to bear the saddle of financial catastrophe which for some extent resulted in debacle. The story takes us back to the year of 2007 mid July. The area of Beed District has been under the impact of drought and famine for a long time. Consequently



we see “there are a few eagles flying very high from one end to the other in search of something.” The writer metaphorically points at the politicians and industrialists those who are always to take the advantages of such adverse situations of the farmers. He renounces farming and finds a job of porter which brings adequate money to make both ends meet. Circumstances play great role in his life and bring constructive and depressing blow of winds in his cognisant and subliminal mind.

Subodh Kadale being debt-ridden finds no aids from anywhere to slacken his mental turbulence as well as his debt. Subodh tries to cool down his anger by doing excessive efforts in slogging but the shining Sun which symbolises his cruel circumstances burns out all his expectations and aspirations to ashes. Subodh's is a small family: his wife Rupali and daughter Chimu; and they live in a small hut near the fields. After more than 70 years of independence country like India has failed to change the face of farming. Agriculture sector still lags behind to achieve security and financial independency. Government institutions and banks have become haunted places for farmers and suicide is the only way out of their problems. In constant struggle and increase of debt he prays to God, If possible, kill all three of us, before taking away the remaining at least, I will be free from the burden of replying.” In an insane spell, he enters his shanty and imagines his act of suicide because he left with the only option. Finally, Subodh moves to the railway tracks to throw himself in front of a moving train. Vanhi, a small girl appears as a saviour to his life. Vanhi has words with Subodh and her

aura, her school bag, magical lunch-box and unique way to preserve water have strange impact on him.

"In the time when we hear the news of suicide committed by the farmers every other day, [Hang on: A Second Wind](#) weaves a new hope for the farmers and all other depressed souls. Although this is a fiction, it has the potential to motivate people to see life from a positive perspective."

Khurshid Alam, Editor-in-Chief, Contemporary Literary Review India

This is the turning point in the story; Vanhi's brilliance and affection in treatment make a lasting impact on his psyche and soul. An express train passes by while they are in conversation. Vanhi asks why the train killed her father? Subodh's blood and bone are chilled hearing Vanhi's father's death. What a thunderstorm on Subodh. He finds empathy in Chimu as Vanhi if he commits suicide. The little angle adds value to his life and seeds a dream of magnitude in him. Subodh gets new inspiration and determination to tackle all the ordeals and obstacles of his life.

The change in Subodh baffles Stephen, the bank manager whom he found a frustrated man yesterday. But now he was a new resolved man, full of confidence and brimming with life. Stephen offers Subodh the job of a Security Guard in his bank. All at once Subodh realizes that suicide is not the solution of any problems. Life provides us many alternatives to stand tall in thick and thins of life. Subodh never looks back and steps up one by one on the ladder of life. His new resolve is not only inspiring for him but he wants to do good for others as well. He finds his Dream Destination to build a water storage tank to quench the thirst of the fields and animals. His hard work

and determination bears wonders. Vanhi remains an ultimate source of motivation and the brainchild of all his aspirations.

All characters of the story are well knitted and seem working in coherence to make Subodh a triumphant hero. Vanhi, Rupali, Gajanan, Stephen, Vasudeo, Nagraj, Nilesh, Sachin and Chimu remain vital forces in his victory and achievements. The motif of guiding forces is very evident in the story. The narrative plot line revolves around the character of Subodh, the protagonist of the story. The wave of disappointments and grief come in bits but they couldn't shake his determination and fortitude. Bit by bit he becomes more and more resolute in his aspirations. Stephen plays the role of his mentor, buddy, and the psycho-pomp. Subodh countenances all hurdles and obstacles. The story is a chase of stupendous dream that is symbolised as a challenge to make over the problem of suicidal tendencies among the debt-ridden farmers of the country.

The writer advocates the idea very strappingly that suicide is never an option to cope with the problems of life; neither life is so easy of a framer especially in adverse situations. However, our fortitude and hard work to retain oneself in all thick and thin could do wonders. How a wretched poor debt-ridden suicide survivor farmer Subodh has become a public figure, a motivation to many distressed farmers. How he builds a pond which was almost an impossible task. His dream takes the shape of a project *Vanhi* and later into a trust. The social evil of consumption of alcohol is also addressed remarkably. The pond turns into a lake and the lake into a full irrigation system later. Surprisingly it is included in the State Rural

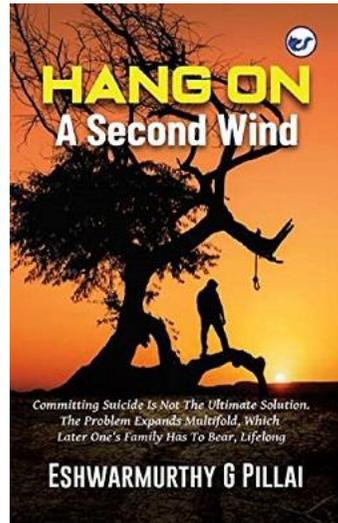
Development program, really a gigantic achievement for a man like Subodh. The story reminds us about Dashrath Manji, a landless labourer from Bihar an untouchable from the Gehlour who dug a road through a mountain against all odds and without any help from any one and proved that nothing is impossible to achieve. Subodh also proves that nothing is impossible to a willing heart.

Title: [Hang on: A Second Wind](#)

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