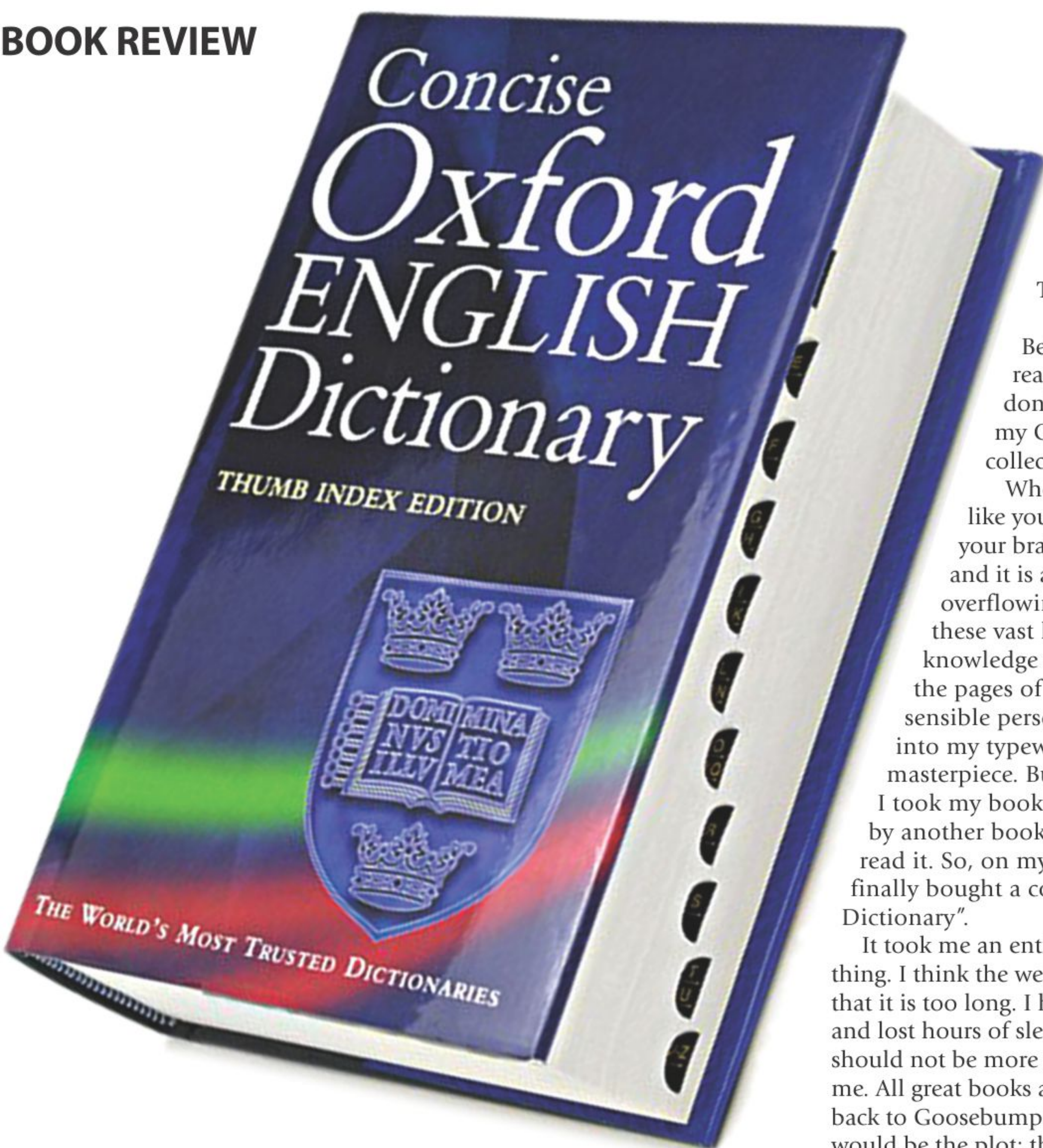


BOOK REVIEW



THE VERDICT WILL SURPRISE YOU

TASNIM ODRIKA

Being an avid reader, I have read all the great books. If you don't believe me I can show you my Goosebumps book collection.

When you're a voracious reader like yours truly, you will realise that your brain is like a treasure chest and it is a chest which is overflowing. It cannot contain all these vast knowledge. This extensive knowledge needs to be preserved in the pages of other books. So, like any sensible person I poured all my wisdom into my typewriter and created a masterpiece. But all the 50 publishers that I took my book up to seemed to be taken by another book and kept urging me to read it. So, on my way home one day I finally bought a copy of "The Oxford English Dictionary".

It took me an entire month to read the whole thing. I think the weakest point of the book is that it is too long. I had to skip so many meals and lost hours of sleep behind this. Books should not be more than 200 pages according to me. All great books are around 200 pages (refer back to Goosebumps). Another weak point would be the plot; the weak point being the

complete absence of any plot. Also, there were way too many characters. Some of them, I found, were quite redundant (fortuitous, flummox, etc. being few of the examples). I had a hard time keeping up with all of them. Some of the characters were too complicated for me to even comprehend.

Now that I have gone over all the faults, let me tell you, it wasn't all that bad. Although it failed to provide a good reading experience for me, after a month of carrying it around I've started noticing the changes in my biceps (come at me now, predators). Also, it helped me avoid a lot of social interactions. For some reason, nobody approaches you when you're reading *The Oxford English Dictionary*. My guess is people were intimidated by me and thought that I was out of their league.

Honestly, I would rate the book a 2/10. The first point for my improved biceps and the second one for all the social interactions it helped me curb. Not a must read but you could give it a try. I definitely would not read it again because my brain still hurts from all the thinking I had to do. Lastly, I would urge the writers to include a bit of thrill and romance in the next sequel.

Tasnim Odrika is having an existential crisis at the moment and doesn't really know who she is anymore. Send her compliments at odrika_02@yahoo.com

Rekindling Old Hobbies

MASHIYAT NAYEEM

A common excuse that slips out of our mouth every now and then is "life happened". Somewhere along the way we all lose sight of ourselves, about who we used to be, about what we liked.

While change is inevitable, sometimes it is necessary to reconnect with your old self, specifically, your old past times, maybe as a boredom buster, maybe as an act of self-care. Enter: hobbies you stowed away at the back of the cupboard.

First and foremost, just pick it up. Pick up your dusty paintbrushes, harmonica, book, game controller or even a spatula. Do a few practice runs. Don't dwell on it. The more you dwell on it, the less likely you are to engage yourself with it.

The most important thing to keep in mind is that you might not necessarily be as proficient at the activity as you were before. Don't get frustrated when you see your paint strokes aren't as smooth or you can't knit as fast and intricate as before. Time makes us all a little rusty so spontaneity is key and be sure to ward off thoughts about self-doubt. Take inspiration from

everywhere. I know it's easier said than done, but you'll need as much as possible to kick-start your old (new?) hobby. Watch some movies, listen to some music and browse the internet, you never know when inspiration might strike. However, if your favourite hobby is bullying your little brother then you might want to ask him to do something stupid.

Hobbies are essential when you want to unwind and relax. As more and more people succumb to the mindless time killer that is tapping away at

your smartphone, it might seem like another commitment to your busy life (here is where I tell you again to not dwell on it). However, in the long run you will have a stress reliever or an outlet to channel your creative energy. Or rage.

Mashiyat Nayeem has a genuine phobia of onions and has mastered the art of scavenging for beresta in her biryani. Learn more at mashiyat.nayeem@gmail.com

