

I get asked this question many times. Correction: I got asked this question once when I grabbed a huge, menacing, barking dog and pushed him to the ground. And he whimpered and licked my hands.

Admittedly, I was asked this question by my friend who is deathly scared of dogs. And the dog in question was mine. It is a rescue dog that I am still trying to bring to order which makes it appear questionably mad at times. Mad enough to have nipped me three times in the beginning. I am not afraid of dogs, because they are not spiders. That makes me appear macho to my friend who does not know about my relationship with spiders. But the question remains: how to be macho.

Ladies and a cynical friend named Moyukh will roll their eyes and ask a boldly lettered WHY? Why is there such a need? But secretly, they all love it when a man is macho and knows how to attack a flying cockroach without screaming. Nothing is viler than creatures that rise from the sewers and fly at you. Well, that and many motorcyclists.



## HOW TO BE MACHO WITHOUT BEING MACHO



CARTOON: E R RONNY

First, what is being macho?

When I was a kid, I grew up watching James Bond, secretly. It had that one or two scenes where Bond persuasively kissed the female protagonist, scenes that made it a taboo to watch. Comparatively, it was much tamer than modern teen shows about love, life, and selfies. Leading men were often hairy, angry, arrogant, and smoked cigarettes for that macho, lady-killing, bad breath. Starlets back then would get lost in Anil Kapoor's luxurious chest foliage. Yes, you're opening a new tab to google that.

As I grew up, I realised that the leading men were so macho because they had their script to fall back on. They knew the bad guys would magnetically run towards the hero bullets. Reality was different. I have been in many school fights and naively believed these

would transpire honourably.

Once, a constantly nagging classmate got on my nerves so much, I told him I would meet him after school. Air was tense with the crackle of an impending showdown between two kids who knew no kung-fu. We knew nothing. But we had been at each other's throats before and I knew I could take him. I was quite stupid. I slapped him.

He fell.

He got up.

I kicked him. He fell. I won.

Ooops.

See, he was the real macho guy from the movies because he had something to fall back on. He had relatives in politics. And he had friends who were just like him. I, on the other hand, had pacifist friends. You

can see how this went. I was jumped by four others and I was down. It wasn't fair, but they won. I would have had my bottom (or rather, my head) kicked harder had it not been for a college kid who jumped in and broke up the fight.

Apparently, being macho also means being stupid. I met a long lost old friend a couple days ago who reminded me of the time I was hanging onto the roof of a car speeding past his house past midnight, many years ago. Long story short, I was going home on my motorbike when a car rammed into me. They wanted to mug me. Took my bike, two of them tussled with me for my wallet and papers but luckily my helmet saved me. I took it off and hit them and did the one smart thing I could do: I ran. Unfortunately, the road was long and

*Continued to page 15*



ঐতিহ্যের আর এক নতুন আধুনিকতা  
ঠিক যেমন রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য মানেই

# স্যান্ডালিনা

## সোপ

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us on /Santalina