

"I'LL MAKE THE WORLD THE WAY I LIKE IT"

With her mismatched stockings, red hair, freckly face and super human strength, Swedish supergirl Pippi Longstocking is a literary and cultural icon, still going strong in her 75th anniversary year. Here's why...



When Swedish author Astrid Lindgren's most famous creation — Pippi Longstocking — first arrived on the literary scene in 1945, the character's generosity of spirit and fearless approach to life leapt from the pages. Since then, the adventures of the 'world's strongest girl' have sold 160 million copies and been translated into 100 languages. That she became so globally popular was also a sign of the times. The world's strongest girl, who greeted violence and all unpleasantness with a smile, was for millions the perfect antidote to the horror of the war years that preceded her arrival.

A childhood fantasy

One can easily understand why Pippi inspired delight in millions of readers — including Michelle Obama, Lady Gaga, Madonna, Amy Poehler and Studio Ghibli's Hayao Miyazaki. Thanks to her bag of gold coins, the nine-year-old protagonist lives in Villa Villekulla, with her pet monkey and horse; free from social conventions, humdrum routine of school and homework. She relies on herself for everything. She sleeps with her feet on the pillow, and turns everything up-

In 2002, the Norwegian Nobel Institute listed the 'Pippi Longstocking' as one of the 'Top 100 Works of World Literature,' based on a worldwide poll of 100 authors

side down. Moreover, she's strong enough to heave policemen into bushes and dangle bullies from trees. In an interview with 'Today', the former first lady Michelle Obama called Pippi her first book love. "I was really fascinated with this strong little girl that was the centre of everything, and she was almost magical in a way. She was stronger and tougher than anyone. She had superhuman strength and I got a kick out of her."

An anti-bullying icon

Pippi never let her age be a barrier to what she wanted to do, and was so witty that she often bested village elders in conversations. For example, sample the follow-

ing exchange: "No, I don't suffer from freckles," said Pippi. The lady finally understood. Then she happened to glance at Pippi and exclaimed: "But, dear child, your whole face is covered in freckles!" "That's right," said Pippi. "But they don't bother me. I like them! Good morning to you!"

Like the above, Pippi often uses non-violence to solve conflicts or protect other children from bullying.

Be yourself

Jens Andersen, Lindgren's biographer, described Pippi as a mixture of Huckleberry Finn and Superman. With her carrot-coloured gravity-defying pigtails and mis-

matched stockings, Pippi wore whatever she liked, including plenty of gold bangles, fun hats, and even an occasional frilly dress to her patched-up romper. Pippi didn't let any sort of doubt cloud any of her days or moods. In the first book, she says: "Don't you worry about me. I'll always come out on top."

But before you presume her to be an egomaniac — she did declare a 'Pippi Longstocking Day' in her honour — Pippi was also known to frequently treat the orphans in her village to ice creams with her own money. Her self-assurance gives her the ability to walk on walls and ceilings, save children from burning buildings, and outsmart the adults trying to keep her down. If we could each have just a pinch of Pippi Longstocking's confidence, there would be no limit to what we could do.

COMPILED BY NITYA SHUKLA

THE REBEL GIRL

FULL NAME: 'Pippilotta Victoriarina Teacosy Applemint Ephraim's-daughter Longstocking'.

PARENTS: Her mother died soon after her birth, and her father, Captain Ephraim Longstocking, is missing at sea.

ORIGIN STORY:

The story begins with the nine-year-old protagonist moving into Villa Villekulla, with her monkey, named Mr Nilsson, and her horse, Alfonso. Thanks to her suitcase of gold coins, Pippi is financially independent at a young age. Soon after moving in, she befriends two children living next door, Tommy and Annika Settergren, who are considered to be 'obedient' as opposed to free-spirited Pippi.

INSPIRATION: 'Pippi' was named by Astrid Lindgren's daughter Karin, who asked her mother for a get-well story when she was off school due to illness.

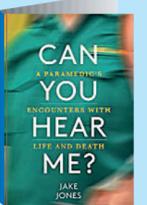


Astrid Lindgren

The Reading list

CAN YOU HEAR ME?

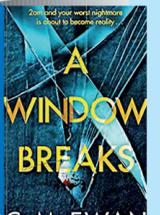
By Jake Jones Quercus



In this account of 10 years as an ambulance service paramedic, Jones shares stories of the challenges he faced: for instance, the man who stopped breathing in a supermarket toilet; the silent newborn baby; the abusive woman who physically attacks him; the woman in cardiac arrest at home. This beautifully-written book, punctuated with wry humour, is an often sobering portrayal of the ailing, the distressed and the lonely in our society. It's an uplifting read.

A WINDOW BREAKS

By C M Ewan Pan



After a brutal mugging and a bereavement, Tom goes to Scotland to recuperate with his family. But suddenly, the mild-mannered lawyer must turn action hero. Brilliantly tense action thriller with some real heart-in-your-mouth moments. Interestingly, the whole story takes place over the course of one night and shows the resilience of a family who have been targeted at a remote house in Scotland.

LATE IN THE DAY

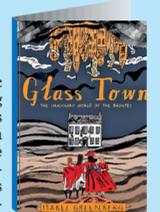
by Tessa Hadley



This compelling novel dissects the lives and loves of four largely unlikeable characters. Extrovert Lydia and shy Christine were best friends at college where Lydia fell for self-obsessed Alex. Meanwhile the wealthy Zachary, Alex's best friend, took a shine to Christine. However, many years later, Zachary is married to Lydia, and Alex to Christine. But when Zachary dies, their lives are upended and the hidden secrets of their tight-knit relationships begin to unravel.

GLASS TOWN

by Isabel Greenberg



In this beautifully-drawn graphic novel, Charlotte Bronte is mourning the death of her beloved siblings when a character she created as a child, Charles Wellesley, appears. He leads her back into the richly-imaginative world that the young Brontes created, offering much-needed escape. From the vivid artwork to a story as poignant and touching as it is witty, this is an artful, inventive and deeply moving mash-up of fact and fiction. DAILY MIRROR

READ THIS



PIPPY LONGSTOCKING

1 Life becomes a lot more fun for Tommy and Annika when Pippi moves in next door.

PIPPY LONGSTOCKING GOES ABOARD

2 Pippi buys 18 kg of sweets, tames boa constrictors and takes Tommy and Annika to a desert island.

PIPPY LONGSTOCKING IN THE SOUTH SEAS

3 Tommy and Annika get to go with Pippi to Kurrekurredudd Island in the South Seas.

Got an eggcorn?

Presenting a collection of words coined by mishearing or misreading, which are known as eggcorns

An eggcorn, as Merriam-Webster puts it, is "a word or phrase that sounds like and is mistakenly used in a seemingly logical or plausible way for another word or phrase".

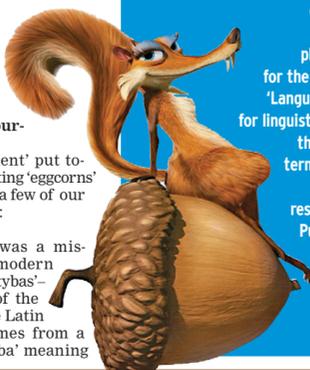
For example here's a common one: saying "all intensive purposes" when you mean "all intents and purposes."

"The Independent" put together a few interesting 'eggcorns' to which we added a few of our own. Here they are:

1 Syllabus: It was a misreading of a modern Latin word 'Sittybas' — accusative plural of the word 'Sittyba'. The Latin word actually comes from a Greek word 'Sittuba' meaning

DID YOU KNOW

In 2003, American professor Mark Liberman discussed the case of a woman who substituted the phrase 'egg corn' for the word 'acorn' on 'Language Log' (a blog for linguists). He lamented that there was no term to explain this mistake. In response, Geoffrey Pullum, professor of linguistics, suggested one use 'eggcorn'.



"title slip, label."

2 Forlorn hope: A mistranslation of Dutch word 'Verloren hoop' which meant 'lost troop' used to describe a contingent sent into battle first and thus expected to suffer casualties.

3 Ammunition: Derives from a re-division of the French 'la munition', which was heard as 'l'ammunition' by French soldiers in the Middle Ages, and this form was borrowed into English in the 1600s before the 'l' was dropped altogether.

4 Scandinavia: Not sure if this is a mistake or simply the chaos of the evolution of language. The story goes that it was originally 'Scadinavia', but Roman author Pliny the Elder added an 'n' in the first century AD.

5 Madagascar: Marco Polo saw 'Mogadishu' on an Arabic map, applied it to the wrong place and garbled it, calling the island 'Madageiscar'.

POEMS

DEEDS OF A SHAH OF ISTANBUL

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread Here begins a tale forgotten and seldom read The deeds of a Shah of Istanbul, Who was, by all accounts, a fool.

In those days, war was all the rage 'Glorious' battles enacted onstage Roused in the King a fervour most weird For his name to be tabooed and feared.

By royal decree, war was declared On a random neighbour which had fared Quite peacefully; but there were none who cared — For what is morality against loot to be shared?

The Generals, they were strategic masters — So greatly skilled as to ensure disasters. But for all their fallacies, they had a design

The minister brandishing an order the king 'did' sign... For this minister in reality Was a man of great notoriety; The Pirate-Captain of the corsairs Who pillaged the seas and befouled the airs.

Said Pirate-minister to his men, "Arr, matesy, I'd have ye ken — A war will rage 'cross moor and fen Ensurrrre the end of the King's men!"

In black powder they swathed the battlefield And drenched it in oil to raise the yield Of the terrible flames that would devour

The men, and leave their wives quite sour. When the battle began, they set it alight. Seeing their doom, the men took flight. 'A dragon!' they yelled, 'a dragon has come!' The pirates sang and drank too much rum.

You see, not having imbibed any Science The men had in soldiery placed their reliance Cursing their King, proclaiming him dumb, The poor fools ran till their feet were numb.

But the foolishness was all a facade quite clever The King had in secret a very evil endeavour Stupidity never was his majesty's lot The entire war was a sinister plot...

By burning both armies, the King would claim Both Kingdoms' treasures to his sole name.

Escaping in time, the King did pass, His battered army, which had failed, alas — But so proud was he of his great villainy That he forgot that most sacred litany — "Never dost thou reveal thine evil plan Facing those who may squish thee in a second's span."

"You useless rabble, this was my machination! With all your gold, I go now for celebration!" The soldiers

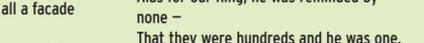
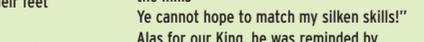
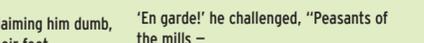
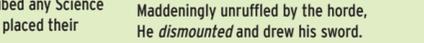
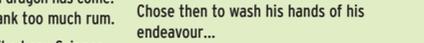
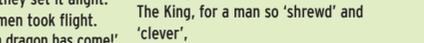
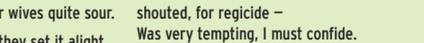
shouted, for regicide — Was very tempting, I must confide. The King, for a man so 'shrewd' and 'clever', Chose then to wash his hands of his endeavour... Maddeningly unruffled by the horde, He *dismounted* and drew his sword.

"En garde!" he challenged, "Peasants of the mills — Ye cannot hope to match my silken skills!" Alas for our King, he was reminded by none — That they were hundreds and he was one. Finding mercy quite remiss, The men combined did take up a boulder. Said they, "Your majesty, you will soon miss That which rests upon your shoulder".

And ere the King realised and fled They hauled him up and smashed him dead.



Sumantra Ganguly, class XI, K R Mangalam school, Delhi



FEBRUARY 19, 2020 MUST SEE MUST DO

TV & MOVIES

WILDEST SURVIVAL, ANIMAL PLANET, 3.56 PM

FOOD PARADISE INTERNATIONAL, FYI TV18, 5.05 PM

LIFE OF PI, STAR MOVIES, 6.11 PM

JOHNNY ENGLISH REBORN, SONY PIX SD, 9.00 PM

FACT: Gopal K Gokhale and Mahatma Gandhi shared a guru-shishya relationship. In what would now appear to be a strange turn of phrase, Gandhi often referred to Gokhale as "mahatma". He also financed many of Gandhi's initiatives, including the setting up of the Sabarmati Ashram upon Gandhi's return to India.

1878: Thomas Alva Edison patented a music player (the phonograph).

1915: Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Indian political leader, died.

THIS DAY THAT YEAR

1963: "The Feminine Mystique" by Betty Friedan, widely credited as the start of second-wave feminism, is published.

1986: The Soviet Union launched the Mir space station.

FACT: Thomas Edison's removal from school proved beneficial for his career, as he developed self-learning skills with appetite for knowledge. Fond of Shakespeare's plays, he wanted to be an actor.

However, due to his high-pitched voice & his shyness, he gave up the idea.

Who remembers the earlier times When life was all about playing? In the day, it was time to run after the butterflies And in the night, watch the magical fireflies On the weekends, running around With parents beckon-

ARYAN KAUSHAL, class VIII, CNM School, Mumbai

ing for supper aloud Reading books and gazing at the sun Ending the day with a fun and casual run On days of school being with friends and learning hard, And coming home to have fun with siblings in the yard. At dusk, absorbing the beautiful sunset And staring at a farmhouse silhouette In the night, looking at the stars, And wondering if one of them was Mars When the lights went out Scaring the family all about

Well, all those times times are lost now Since technology is the only "Wow!" You ask kids, "How was school?" They'll be negative and call one a fool You request a friend to come out and play He'll say, "Sorry, today is my 'Video Game Day!'" Well, remembering the life in the 80s Makes you weak in your knees. (This poem is from the author's book 'Words in Verses, 42 poems by a twelve year old')