

Science and Fiction

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Jayant V. Narlikar

**The Return of
Vaman—
A Scientific Novel**

 Springer

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for Astronomy and Astrophysics
Pune
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Preface

It gives me great pleasure to present this sample of my science fiction work to the international reader. So far my sci-fi stories and novels have only been published within India where they have received a warm welcome. However, this happens to be the first occasion when a novel and a short story are being jointly published by Springer.

Since this is the first time that my science fiction is being projected abroad, the publisher made the very pertinent suggestion that I also write an introductory article describing my association with this form of literature. It is all the more pertinent because by profession I am a scientist working in the field of astrophysics. This exercise includes a brief description of my background and why and how I got into writing sci fi. Knowing full well that other sci fi writers may have different viewpoints, I felt that I should stick to my own views in a personalized autobiographical statement.

Life in India is inextricably mixed with Indian mythology and this shows up in the two examples of sci fi presented here. This is peculiar to India, and one may wonder how ancient myths can be combined with futuristic ideas that arise in sci fi. Thus Ganesha and Vaman are part of those myths but, through various rituals, they have become part of our modern world of jets, computers and cell phones. So why not take a step into the future and integrate them into science fiction?

Anyway, since my views *in extenso* are given in my introductory article, I will be brief here. It only remains for me to thank the Springer publication staff, and in particular Chris Caron, for a very helpful interaction. Their help and advice are much appreciated.

Inter-University Centre
for Astronomy and Astrophysics
Pune, India
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Jayant V. Narlikar

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