



“In The Shadow of Freedom” Three Lives in Hitler’s Berlin and Gandhi’s India

Set against the backdrop of Hitler’s Germany and Gandhi’s India, *“In The Shadow of Freedom”* vividly tells the colourful story of the intermeshing stories of two women, the one man they both loved, their growing friendship and two countries battling with violence and non-violence, fascism and colonization.

This remarkable tale describes the turbulent lives of author Laxmi Tendulkar Dhault’s parents Ayi Ganpat Tendulkar and Indumati, in the early thirties, narrated by Laxmi herself. Her father, Ayi Ganpat Tendulkar, a young man who spent his early childhood in Mayem near Bicholim in Goa travelled to Germany to study in 1922. Whilst doing his engineering degree he worked as a journalist in Berlin and was sent several times to India to cover the Indian freedom struggle. In 1932, he came into contact with renowned filmmaker Thea von Harbou, the writer of the classic films *Metropolis* and *M* and the former wife of legendary director Fritz Lang. They were later married when Fritz Lang left for Hollywood.

Many years his senior, Thea became Tendulkar’s support and mainstay in Germany, encouraging and supporting him in bringing other young Indian students to the country. Hitler’s entry to power put an end to this, and on Thea von Harbou’s advice, Tendulkar returned to India where he became involved in Gandhi’s campaign of non-cooperation with the British. He settled in Belgaum and started a Marathi newspaper called *Varta*. With Thea’s consent, he soon married Indumati Gunaji, a Gandhian activist and Laxmi’s mother.

Caught up in the whirlwind of Gandhi’s activism, Indumati and Tendulkar spent several years in Indian prisons. Only after their release in 1945 were they able to come together, thereby complying with a condition that Gandhi had put on their marriage, that they remain apart for several years and do not have children until India gets independence from the British.

In this exceptional and telling account, Indumati and Tendulkar’s daughter, Laxmi Tendulkar Dhault traces the turbulent time lives of her parents and Thea von Harbou, against the backdrop of Nazi Germany and Gandhi’s India, using a wealth of documents, letters and images never seen before.



About Laxmi Tendulkar Dhaul

Laxmi is a Post-Graduate in Biochemistry from the University of Mumbai. As an author she has penned titles across genres spanning spiritual and temporal sections. Her published works include 'The Sufi Shrine of Ajmer', 'The Dargah of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya', 'Guide to the Gentleman Chef', and 'Chimi's Dream'.

She resides in Mumbai and is currently involved in producing animation films to create environmental awareness amongst school children.

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