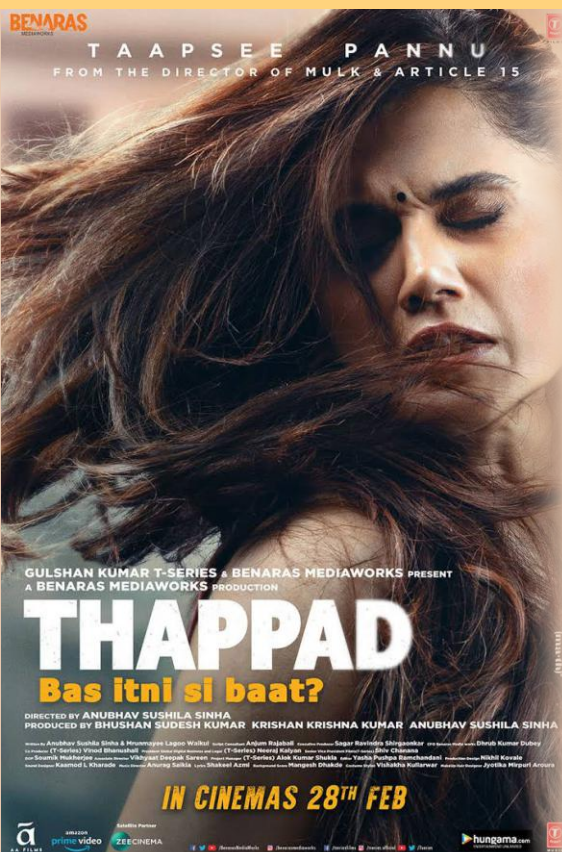




ADD 15 YEARS TO OUR LIFE
CAN WE? OF COURSE, WE CAN!!

Add 15 Years | ADDING 15 YEARS TO LIFE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP AND/OR OUR MARRIAGE

USA/India Edition 2021 | ENGLISH



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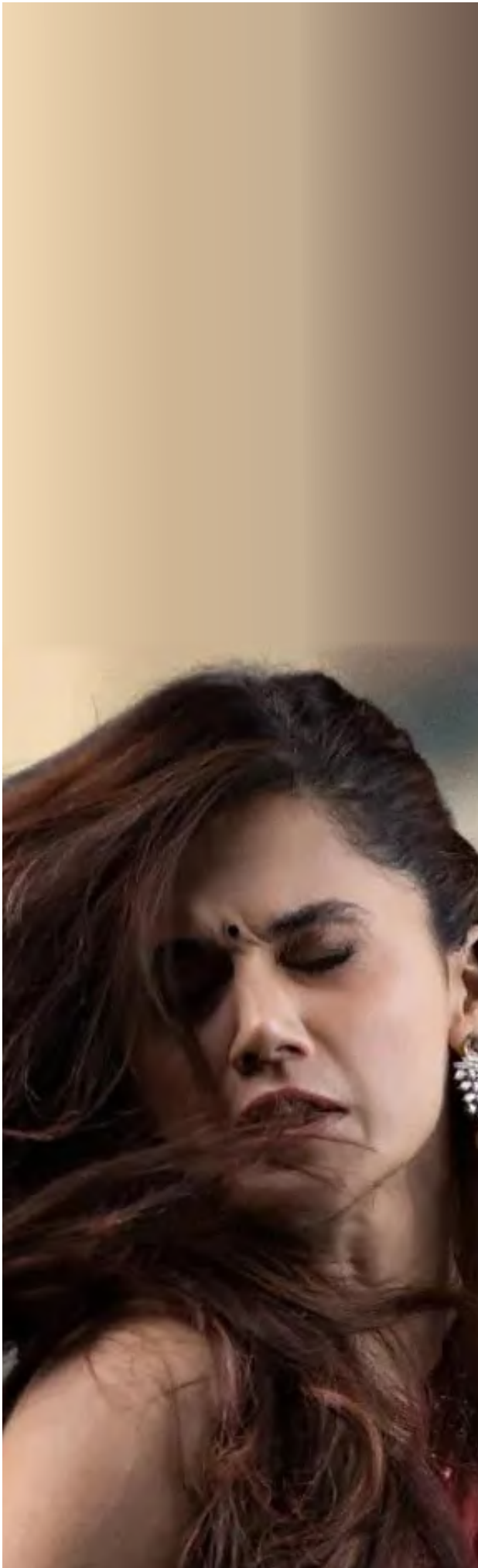
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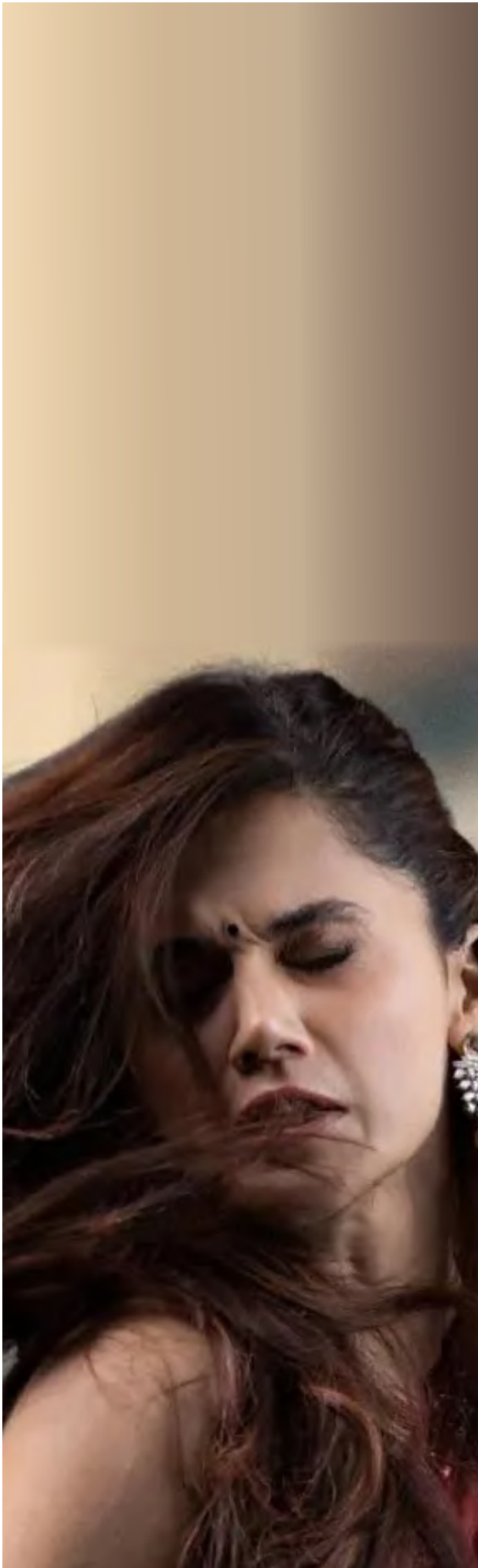
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Chapter 1

Introduction

This book is an ode to all the women that I have known.

Be it my mother, my wife, my sister or my daughter.

I salute you all!

The book brings out the impact I felt after watching the movie “Thappad” and it basically is an interpretation of certain dialogues from the movie

When I see the treatment of women, in India and USA, I see so much difference in approach in both India and USA that I felt I had to write about it. Women are treated as equals in USA. They shoulder also responsibilities with men equally. They are not looked down up like in India. Hence, I felt it to be my duty being a son, husband and father to bring out the situations which need our attention.

We need to raise our men with a strong foundation, so that our women don't feel burdened like they do now.



Chap1Fig1

Chapter 2

Dialogue 1- Do you know what happened with that one slap? I saw all those unfair slaps, which I hadn't felt before, clearly

Dialogue 1: पता है उस एक थप्पड़ से क्या हुआ? वह सारे अनफेयर थप्पड़ साफ साफ दिखने लगे, जो मुझे पड़े तो थे पर मैंने पहले महसूस नहीं किये थे।

From a Young Wife

A woman on an average day faces more discrimination on every walk of life. Be it at home, on the road, or at workplace. It may be or may not be intentional. But it's always there just like that ghost you don't see, but sense its presence. There happens one big incident in our life where we feel all those small discriminations that have touched us in different walks to life. Be it that auto rickshaw driver who says in his tapori language “*madam kaha chalogi*” or that colleague at work who slyly says “*are you interested in coffee today*”.



Chap2Fig1

Chapter 3

Dialogue 2- Dude, you are so dumb, I have married you and I am tolerating you! Be thankful!

Dialogue 2: यार तुम कितनी डम्ब हो, तुमसे शादी की है, सेहता हूँ शुक्र मनाओ।

From a Young Wife

Most women face bias on an everyday basis in their marital homes. Indian society has made women tolerant in so many ways that now they have lost their voices. Be it their husband, or father in law, or mother in law, or sister in law— they hear some many taunts in their everyday daily chores, that with each day they either give in or they call it quits. Thankfully we see the rise of feminism which will probably bring back those lost voices.



Chap3Fig1

Chapter 4

Dialogue 3- Hey friend - please eat! My wife is great at cooking! Atleast respect her talent a little

Dialogue 3: यार प्लीज खाओ यार, मेरी वाइफ पकाने में तो एक्सपर्ट है, उसके टैलेंट की कुछ तो कदर करो।

From a Young Wife

This shows the mentality of men to ensure that they show off their trophy wives in front of their friends, family and colleagues. This makes the women susceptible to judgments by every tom, dick and harry. She is judged for her looks, for her education, for her cooking skills and for every choice she makes in her day to day life. While men roam free like the king of the jungle.



Chap4Fig1

Chapter 5

Dialogue 4- Marriage means sexual relationship. If you were not interested in sex, why did you marry me and ruin my life?

Dialogue 4: शादी का मतलब ही होता है सेक्सुअल रिलेशनशिप। जब सेक्स में इंटरैस्ट नहीं था तो शादी कर के मेरी जिंदगी क्यों बर्बाद की?

From a Young Wife

Indian men feel that marriage is a license to have sex. Indian mentality has made sexual life into this larger than life image which has created issues such as rapes, sexual harassment rampant in India. The Indian society and its people need to realize that sex is important but so is respect for women.

There was a movie starring megastar Amitabh Bacchhan called “Pink”, where he is the lawyer for a victim of rape and sexual violence and while defending the victim in court he says **“NO means NO”**. When a woman says she is not interested in having sex then men must respect her choice or else that is the violation of her right to her body. The same must be applicable for sex in marriage.



Chap5Fig1

Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (“IPC”) includes all forms of sexual assault involving non-consensual intercourse with a woman. However, Exception 2 to Section 375 exempts unwilling sexual intercourse between a husband and a wife over fifteen years of age. Thus, making marital-rape a non-criminal act in India. This needs to change and the same will only change when men understand and respect women and their right to their own body.

Chapter 6

Dialogue 5- Hey – I take care of all your expenses, atleast share one or two responsibilities

Dialogue 5: यार तुम्हारा सारा खर्चा तो उठा रहा हूँ, तुम एक-दो जिम्मेदारियां तो उठा लो

From a Young Wife

Indian society has traditionally given the responsibility to women to handle all the chores related to their homes. With changing times, women started to educate themselves and got a chance to step out of the boundaries of their houses. They not only had to manage everyday work of their homes but also work pressure.

While men have it easy (they are just expected to earn money), women are expected to see - if the house is stocked up with ration, the ac in the house is working, the food is cooked, the babies are looked after and the clothes for the husband are washed and ironed, while also doing everything needed to be done at office.

Is it fair? Should we not teach our sons as we teach our daughters to shoulder all the responsibilities of the house? Should we teach our sons to make round rotis (Chappattis) while teaching our daughters how to ride a bike? Will that bring a change in the mentality of our growing boys? Will they respect women and shoulder their responsibilities equally? We see this in countries abroad, hopefully the same happens in the Indian culture as well!



Chap6Fig1

Chapter 7

Dialogue 6- Can I get a cup of tea? Or does your feminism not allow that?

Dialogue 6: सुनो, एक कप चाय मिलेगी क्या? या तुम्हारा फेमिनिज्म उसकी इजाजत नहीं देता?

From a Young Wife

Subconsciously we have taught our boys to take women for granted. And so they do! And in doing so, boys crush the self-respect of women in all walks of life. Get me a cup of tea? The wife has a headache, she says - No, I can't! The husband has a taunt ready- your feminism doesn't allow you to get me a cup of tea?

Well, well, there you go! Another woman's self-respect crushed at the hands of her husband's ego! Please teach your boys and your girls the need to respect each other in a marriage! Because that will lay the foundation for any healthy relationship. Or else a woman will always have a subconscious thought of being unequal inspite of her being a gold medalist or a feminist!



Chap7Fig1

Chapter 8

Dialogue 7- Oh come on, if you were capable enough you would have earned atleast half of what I earn

Dialogue 7: ओह come on यार, तुम इतनी capable होती ना तो मुझसे कम से कम आधा तो कमा ही रही होती।

From a Young Wife

Hurt women so much that they never get over their insults. They feel they can never match men and their capabilities. Every time a woman wants to stand on her feet, some or the other person would question her ability to achieve anything she wants to put her hand on. Be it starting work or running her own business.

We should make men understand that they respect women for the choices they make and try to stand by them in those choices (whether emotionally, physically or financially)



Chap8Fig1

Chapter 9

Dialogue 8- What should I bother asking you? Do you even know the “I” of Investment?

Dialogue 8: अरे तुमसे क्या पूछना था। तुम्हे इन्वेस्टमेंट्स का। भी पता है।

From a Young Wife

Questioning the very existence of women and their abilities has been the basis on which discrimination thrives.

You demean them in such a manner that they question themselves on each step. If they want to divorce a man for any XYZ reason, they would be asked – would you be able to handle your kids alone? Would you be able to earn enough? Will you be able to sustain the hardships of society? And so on and so forth. And then woman in question and many other such women going through these hardships, just give up and live those average lives from which they could be free long back.



Chap9Fig1

Chapter 10

Dialogue 9- Should I beg for sex from you or you want to charge for it now?

Dialogue 9: क्या तुमसे भीक मांगू सेक्स के लिए या you want to charge for it now.

From a Young Wife

Sex is a taboo topic in India. Everyone wants to do it, but nobody wants to talk about it. Be it related to sexual issues, contraceptives, reproductive problems, erectile dysfunction, sexual satisfaction and so on and so forth. We need to ensure we educate our children, both boys and girls, about sex and the related issues involving sex. Half of rapes, sexual abuse, sexual harassment cases would drop if we are successful in doing so.



Chap10Fig1

Chapter 11

Dialogue 10- Yes yes, I know your feminism. If you were a feminist you would not have seen my six figure salary

Dialogue 10: है है पता है तुम्हारा फेमिनिज्म। फेमिनिस्ट होती ना तो सिर्फ मेरी सिक्स फिगर सैलरी नहीं देखती।

From a Young Wife

If you like a man for his money, then that makes you a lesser feminist? *Anyone in this society would obviously see what she is getting into.* Be it a man's family, his money, his status, his car etc etc.

Personally, I don't think there is anything wrong with that. Anyone would want a good lifestyle and infact would marry for something and someone better. Even in older times, we have heard about kings who would marry queens who had powerful fathers with powerful kingdoms. If such marital alliances are good for men, then why shouldn't it be allowed for women too!



Chap11Fig1

Chapter 12

Dialogue 11- You are just raising two kids, not that you are the business head of your company

Dialogue 11: अरे दो बच्चे ही तो पल रही हो यार, कौन सा अपनी कंपनी बिज़नेस हेड हो

From a Young Wife

A woman not only carries a baby in her womb for 9 months, but she also manages everything supplemental needed for her baby. Be it breastfeeding the baby during his initial years, or college going adults who want “Maa ke haath ka khaana”!

A mother should give it all!

Be it her career when she delivers her baby and also thereafter when the baby is growing up, to be working part time so that she can look after the baby. Is a man ever expected to do all these things when he has a baby? Do men give up their careers to have babies or do they work part time once their baby needs their full time attention? We all know answers to these questions! But they still remain hidden because the society has put all these responsibilities and sacrifices on the shoulders of women.



Chap12Fig1

Chapter 13

Dialogue 12- Hey – your periods are such a drama, if I say anything – you start crying! Be strong

Dialogue 12: या यह तुम्हे periods वाला बड़ा नाटक है, कुछ बोलो तो रोने लगती हो, Be strong.

From a Young Wife

Periods is also seen as a taboo topic for women!

Well the list is endless!

They are discriminated upon when in periods. Don't touch this, don't touch that and most importantly don't go to the temple! Well educated people surely know that periods is a natural phenomenon! And still some highly educated people also follow these discriminatory practices! What can we then expect from not so educated people?

If a girl is upset over something or is generally not keeping well or is acting strange or low for any reason, the first thing men say is – she must be menstruating or she is having hormonal issues! Well may be she is, but that doesn't mean that she is not doing everything possible in all the pain and crankiness that comes with periods every month! So men – you need to be strong and support a woman in her periods! It would not make you lesser of a man!



Chap13Fig1

Chapter 14

Dialogue 13- Family responsibility or offsite job, you should have sense as to what is important for you and what is not

Dialogue 13: Family responsibility या offsite जॉब, तुम्हे खुद ही सेंस होनी चाहिए ना क्या important है।

From a Young Wife

The one mantra that is taught to women from the beginning of her life is - Balance it all!

Balance your husband and his family!

Balance your needs and your husband's need!

Balance your job and your family.

Balance your kids and your husband!

That's a lot of balancing that's asked for from a woman on an everyday basis.

It's a woman who leaves her parental house and enters an absolutely new marital home. She gives up everything and gives in everything to her new home! And still the expectations from her are endless! It just doesn't end at marriage! It merely begins from there!



Chap14Fig1

Chapter 15

Dialogue 14- Hey kid – don't take your mother in the Parent teacher meeting alone, she will ask stupid questions and your teacher will scold you

Dialogue 14: Beta मम्मी को अकेले PTM में मत ले जाना, स्टुपिड सवाल पूछेगी, मैडम और डाटेंगी।

From a Young Wife

Mothers are mothers!

And that's why whenever any one of us faces any issue or trouble or a smallest hiccup, the first word we say is “Maa”!

Because a mother would do everything in her capacity and everything beyond her ability to be there to support her child in any manner possible! In school, they would want to ask all sorts of questions to ensure their child is doing well and is not in bad company.

This seems like a small task but can go a long way to ensure a child's growth in the right direction. Stupid questions or not, a parent and especially a mother has all the right to ask all she wants to about her child.

Only then would they be able to gauge how her child is doing in his school. There was a movie starring late Bollywood actress Sridevi called “*English Vinglish*” where Sridevi (the mother) is a not really an educated female and how she ends up earning her self-respect by learning the language English at a very later stage in her life. All this just to ensure her kids and her husband treat her with respect!



Chap15Fig1

Chapter 16

Dialogue 15- Look at yourself, you look like a mother of five kids and not one kid. Don't blame me if I get into an affair.

Dialogue 15: Look at yourself, एक बच्चे की माँ हो पर लगती पांच बच्चों की हो| Don't blame me if I get into an affair

From a Young Wife

Women are expected to be prim and proper at all times! Look younger than your age!

Have you ever heard men getting cosmetic surgeries done?

Its been a common practice to taunt women to look fit and beautiful (concepts that are subjective), just so that men can show off their trophy wives!?! A woman has to give birth, she gains weight in this process (which is natural). But she's expected to shed all those kilos in a couple of months post-delivery, just because her husband and the society wants her to look good!



Chap16Fig1

Chapter 17

Dialogue 16- Please stop saying – my home, my home!
Accept your in-laws place now! This is your home now!

Dialogue 16: अरे मेरा घर, मेरा घर बोलना छोड़ो यार, accept your ससुराल now. ये है तुम्हारा घर।

From a Young Wife

A woman leaves her parental house after marriage. Imagine her plight. Follow certain practices, ways, methods all your life till say about 25 (till you get married) and all of a sudden unlearn everything you have learnt and substitute that with all the new ways of the marital home! So easy? (pun intended)!



Chap17Fig1

Chapter 18

Dialogue 17- Today your salary is more than me, so now will you treat me as your servant?

Dialogue 17: अब सैलरी मुझसे ज्यादा हो गई तो क्या नौकर समझोगी मुझे

From a Young Wife

Male ego can destroy a happy marriage in seconds.

Women are told to be subservient to men so that they don't hurt male ego!

Don't earn more than your husband.

Don't argue with your husband, agree to everything your husband says!

Why?

Just to satisfy your husband's so called ego!



Chap18Fig1

Chapter 19

Dialogue 18- One more promotion? I hope your boss isn't getting lucky?

Dialogue 18: एक और प्रमोशन, I hope your boss is not getting lucky.

From a Young Wife

Questioning a woman over her character is killing the woman's confidence in one shot!

All you need to do is – question as to why is she excelling in her job? Are you doing something else? Apart from work that keeps your boss happy? It is nothing but an innuendo that suggests a negative connotation about a woman's character. Men are promoted all the time too? But who has the guts to ask him? Is his boss (Who might be female) – getting lucky too?



Chap19Fig1

Chapter 20

Dialogue 19- You are looking so embarrassing in these pair of shorts! Come on and accept your age and shape please!

Dialogue 19: यार कितनी embarrassing लग रही हो shorts में| Come on, accept your age and shape यार|

From a Young Wife

Oh well! *You've got to dress up your age!*
How many times do we listen to this statement?

When you are young – don't wear shorts,
men get wrong ideas?

When you are a bit older – don't wear
shorts- doesn't suit your figure?

When you are even older – don't wear
shorts – doesn't suit your age?

Well – has anyone asked men to stop
wearing shorts coz they are a particular
age?

That women would stare at them?

That they are married now?

Or that they are a particular age?

Then why should these things be applicable to women alone?

Isn't this gender discrimination?



Chap20Fig1

Chapter 21

Dialogue 20- If you can't take the pressure, leave your job! As it is, I earn enough for the both of us

Dialogue 20: Pressure ले नहीं सकती तो जॉब छोड़ दो ना| वैसे भी I earn enough for both of us.

From a Young Wife

Women are expected to balance their lives, no matter how tough it is for them. Balance work and office, children and husband and so on and so forth. If you are not able to do it even for a single day – the first thing told to you is quit your job? I earn enough for our family! Oh well dear husbands – why don't you quit your job, balance it all and I earn more money than you do? Would that work for you?



Chap21Fig1

Chapter 22

Dialogue 21- Have you had all the fun with your boyfriend that you are not interested in having sex after marriage?

Dialogue 21: क्या सारे मज़े पुराने boyfriend के साथ कर लिए क्या, जो शादी के बाद सेक्स में interest नहीं रहा तुम्हारा।

From a Young Wife

Virginity has been like this moral certificate that one must carry if they are women, especially Indian women wanting to marry! Does this question apply to Indian men?

Even an extremely educated and well-read person could ask a woman if she is virgin before marriage. What education holds to such a person is highly questionable! Can virginity alone define a woman and her character?



Chap22Fig1

Chapter 23

Dialogue 22- Atleast my mother was a good homemaker. You are average in office and average at home

Dialogue 22: अरे मम्मी कम से कम अच्छी homemaker तो थी, तुम तो ऑफिस में भी average, घर में भी average.

From a Young Wife

Comparison between mothers and wives can be seen in an Indian household on an average day! Oh my mother cooks better than you. Oh my mother has a better taste in music! Oh my mother is an exceptional homemaker! Well my reply – Oh why couldn't your mother raise a better son then!



Chap23Fig1

Chapter 24

Dialogue 23- A slap is not what is felt on the face. It is every word that hurts your self-respect.

Dialogue 23: थप्पड़ वह नहीं जो सिर्फ चहरे पर आकर लगता है, थप्पड़ है हर वो शब्द जो आत्मसम्मान पे हमला है।

From a Young Wife

It is essential that in today's fast moving life that *men respect women* and also support them in every way possible. It isn't necessary that a slap is only felt and seen, some implied comments/thoughts/questions can be felt and seen on an everyday basis by women and these might not necessarily be seen or felt by others! For example –a husband asking her wife- “get me tea”, or “is that too feminist for you?” This shows an underlying slap on the woman's face which questions her belief and integrity.



Chap24Fig1

Chapter 25

Dialogue 24- A slap is not when force of hand is used on the face, it is that thinking about pulling down someone as and when convenient

Dialogue 24: थप्पड़ सिर्फ वह नहीं जो हाथ उठाकर मर दिया, थप्पड़ है वो सोच जिसने जब चाहा नज़र से उतर दिया।

From a Young Wife

It is the way people think and believe certain things about women which should change! It is only then that women will be able to stand tall on their feet with all the *self-respect and integrity* that they are rightfully entitled to! Society needs to stop discriminating women on the basis of the clothes she wears or the hairstyle she carries! It's her choice and you ought to respect that!

Your belief system as a society needs to change! Only then will women be able to live their lives with their head held high! Raise sons and daughters equally!



Chap25Fig1

Chapter 26

Dialogue 25- It was not just a slap, it was a sale of a relationship, trust and equality in the relationship

Dialogue 25: वह बस थप्पड़ नहीं, एक रिश्ते, एक भरोसे, बराबरी की नीलामी थी।

From a Young Wife

Trust is important in any relationship!

Once you break that trust, there remains a hole in your relation despite you doing anything to win it back! It's not just a slap on your relationship, it is a slap on everything that you stood for!

The #metoo movement in India and across the world seemed to me to be a slap in the face of a lot of people in the position of power or otherwise. It was a telling tale of women who fought gender discrimination and bias in all walks of life! I feel unfair treatment of women lead to the uprise of feminism and hopefully feminism helps us become equals - be it at home, work or otherwise!

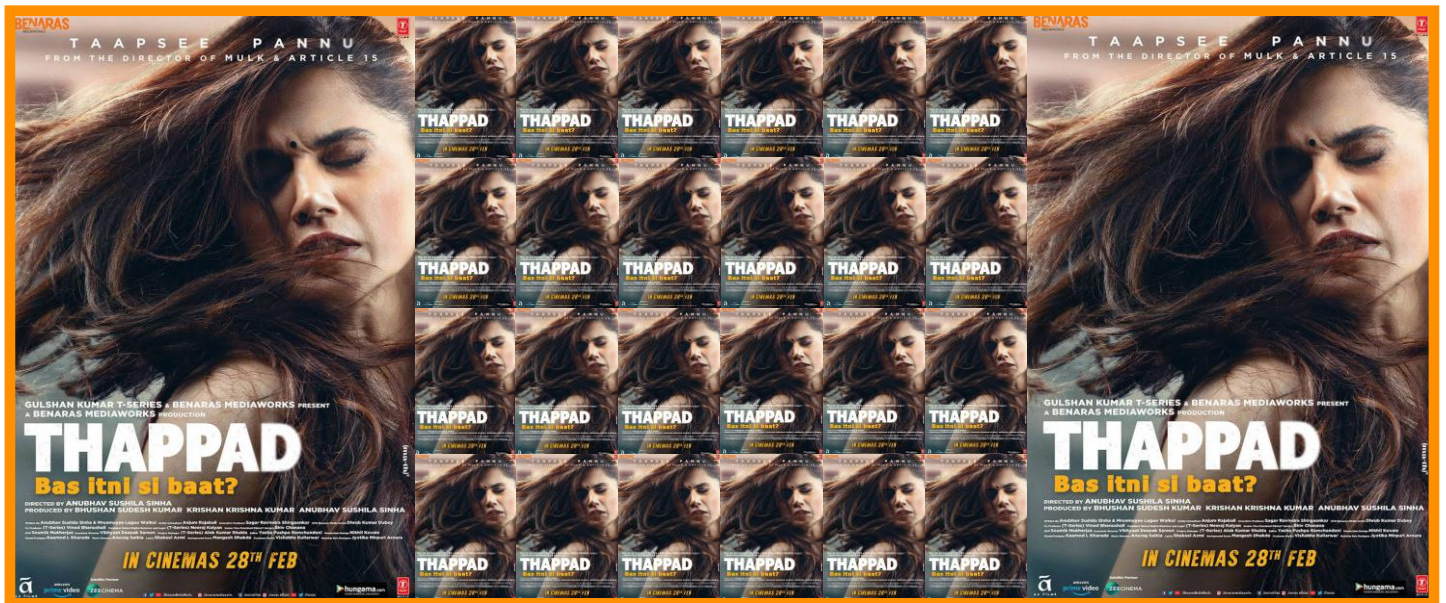


Chap26Fig1

Chapter 27

Dialogue 26- These were 21 salutes from my side against patriarchy or gender discrimination

Dialogue 26: मेरी ओर से patriarchy or gender discrimination के नाम पे 21 थप्पड़ो की सलामी थी।



Chap27Fig1