

Hubris Maximus by Faiz Siddiqui

Faiz Siddiqui's "Hubris Maximus: The Shattering of Elon Musk" delivers a riveting and unflinching portrait of one of the most polarizing figures of our era. Siddiqui, a seasoned Washington Post journalist, investigates Musk's meteoric rise, the chaos that has defined his empire, and the spectacular implosion that has left both admirers and critics reeling. The book is not just a biography—it is a cautionary tale about the dangers of lionizing charismatic leaders, especially when their personal ambitions and eccentricities begin to eclipse the institutions they lead and the societies they influence. Faiz Siddiqui's reporting is meticulous and unsparing. He recounts Musk's infamous 2018 tweet about taking Tesla private, which led to a Securities and Exchange Commission lawsuit and Musk's forced resignation as chairman. The narrative is peppered with episodes that highlight Musk's penchant for overpromising and underdelivering—from the ill-fated "kid-size submarine" during the Thai cave rescue to the broken promise of manufacturing ventilators during the pandemic. Siddiqui also scrutinizes Musk's tumultuous Twitter takeover, detailing how the deal's fallout reverberated through Tesla's stock price and Musk's own credibility. What elevates "Hubris Maximus" beyond standard business reporting is its exploration of Musk's psychology and the broader cultural moment he inhabits. Siddiqui draws parallels between Musk's self-image as a world-saving visionary and the Ayn Randian archetype-driven, uncompromising, and often heedless of collateral damage. The book captures the tension between Musk's utopian rhetoric and the real-world consequences of his actions, including the human costs of his relentless drive for technological disruption and his growing entanglement in American politics. While Siddiqui's account may lack the narrative flair of some recent tech biographies, it compensates with depth and clarity. "Hubris Maximus" is essential reading for anyone seeking to understand not just Elon Musk, but the era of tech titans who wield unprecedented influence over business, policy, and culture. It is a gripping study of ambition, fallout, and the perils of unchecked hubris in the 21st century.

If Elephant's Could Talk by Ranjeeta Raam

"If Elephant's Could Talk" by Ranjeeta Raam is a tender, soul-stirring novel-inverse that dances its way into your heart. At its center is Meenakshi, a young girl in Kerala who hasn't spoken since her mother passed away. Grief wraps around her like a heavy shawl, but it's through the rhythm of classical dance and a profound bond with a gentle temple elephant named Ganesha that she begins to unravel her silence. Raam takes readers on a journey that's not just about healing from personal loss but also about stepping up to protect the voiceless—in this case, the often-abused temple elephants of India. The emotional arc of the story is stitched together with both delicacy and purpose, making this an unforgettable coming-of-age tale. The real magic of this novel lies in its lyrical storytelling. Ranjeeta Raam doesn't merely craft verses—she sculpts emotion, layering imagery and metaphor to bring Meenakshi's world to vivid life. Her words carry the ache of grief and the weight of memory, as seen in lines like "layer upon layer of feelings, all shrivelled up like tender crusts on old wounds," or the quiet heaviness of "my father's eyebrows sag like two heavy sacks filled with wet sand." There's a graceful intimacy in her writing, yet it carries a universal resonance. Though the story is set in India, its emotional truths and cultural textures ripple far beyond, making it a deeply moving experience for both young and adult readers. Meenakshi's story is more than just a tale of personal growth—it's a quiet but determined call for empathy. As she finds her voice, she uses it not for herself alone but to challenge the injustice suffered by elephants kept in captivity. This is where the book's message becomes larger than life. It's about advocacy, resilience, and how sometimes, the loudest voices come from the quietest places. The scenes between Meenakshi and Ganesha are so vivid and tender, you can almost hear the rustle of the forest leaves and the slow, wise breathing of the elephant beside her. Though written for middle-grade readers, "If Elephant's Could Talk" transcends age with its emotional richness and lyrical simplicity. Adults will find themselves just as engrossed, perhaps even more moved by its layered storytelling and poignant commentary on animal rights.

It's a book that speaks gently but firmly, asking us to listen more closely—to the silences of grief, to the quiet strength of children, and yes, to the elephants who could talk, if only we'd learn to hear them.