

Storytelling Dilemmas: Straddling the Indian-Western Divide

by J. A. Joshi

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LEWISVILLE, Texas, USA -- Growing up as an Indian girl in a western country, I was faced with the problem most ethnic children face: the struggle of living in two different worlds. Should I follow the culture of India, as my parents had taught me, or the modern ways of independence and nonrestraint, as I saw in my Western friends? Should I drink alcohol, have boyfriends and live a "liberated" life as my friends did, or should I follow the rules of my faith? I wanted to fit into both worlds, but thought it was impossible. How could I reconcile the two?

It was at this stage in my life that I began to pay more attention to the stories of Lord Rama. Let me share one with you called The Ramayan that spoke to my experience:

Once there was a king, Dashrath, who had three queens,
[SNIP – End of preview.]