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***Twelfth Fail: Hara Vahi Jo Lada Nahi: An Exploration of the Stirring Saga of an IPS Officer***

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**Abstract:**

Twelfth Fail: Hara Vahi Jo Ladha Nahi is a stirring story of the struggle of an IPS officer, Manoj Kumar Sharma. Manoj, the protagonist of this novel or biography, is a poor country boy who, in spite of his first-ever failure in the 12th grade, overcame adversity to become an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer. It is an instance and lesson for the youth who have been struggling to prove themselves and willing to achieve something in their lives. It is an alarming depiction of the life and social and educational obstacles occurred in the ways of Manoj Sharma but he did not give up and walked continuously till he achieves his goal. There are many figures in various arenas of the society who had faced many difficulties during their struggling span and achieve appreciable success in their lives. The society witnesses many such officers and business tycoons who tackled many hurdles and successfully overcame numerous, unbelievable and unexpected issues in their struggling period and proved themselves by achieving their goal. The journey of Manoj Sharma is not an exception to this and he is also one of the figures of the canon of such officers who endured obstacles and difficulties and sacrificed a lot to have recognition and identity as an officer. The present paper is an attempt to prove that the social and educational obstacles, difficulties, and different circumstances can never be the barrier in the way of success. If one performs sincerely and gives his/her best then nothing is unachievable in the globe. If a twelfth failed boy from a small village of Madhya Pradesh, India with no sound background can become an IPS officer then anything can be done. It is an attempt to depict the struggling journey of Manoj Sharma with reference to some other such officers and put them as a role model before the youth whose self-confidence is being lost and they are being trapped by depression, frustration, over expectations due to many reasons and circumstances. The researcher thinks that after reading this novel or biography, the negativity will be unstiffened and instinctive confidence and goodness will be strengthened among the youth and aspirants and therefore this endeavour of composing this paper is being done.

**Keywords:**

Inspiration, Youth, IPS, IAS, IFS, Competitive Examinations, Biography, Manoj Sharma, Struggle, Obstacles, Aspiration, Aspirants, Civil Services, etc.

**Introduction:**

The society always praises the one who does something different from rest of the world. Shiv Khera rightly says that “Winners don’t do different things, they do things differently” (Khera, 288). It is hard work, consistency, sincerity, selfless efforts, patience and sense of sacrifice which bring success, contentment, recognition and endearing identity in one’s life and it might be the reason there are many personalities in the society who have done different things differently and they have formed themselves as the role models for youth and aspirants in their respective fields and people come to know about them through media, newspapers, their extraordinary deeds, lifestyle, job profile, etc. It is truly noteworthy that all these dignitaries have been doing well in their respective fields and it’s highly difficult to pen down the names of all the figures here but still, one can incorporate number of names like Anna Rajam Malohtra, Armstrong Pame, Durga Shakti Nagpal, Ashok Khemka, T. N. Seshan, D. R. Mehta, U. Sagayam, Ansar Shaikh, Rajendra Bharud, Mohammad Ali Shihab, Arti Dogra, G. Shreekanth, Dilip Swami, Ansar Shaikh, etc. in the category of IAS who have struggled a lot to achieve this recognition and position and performed outstanding job in public interest and became public figure. There are some IPS officers like Ajit Doval, Kiran Bedi, Ajit Doval, Rakesh Maria, Navneit Sekera, Manoj Kumar Sharma, Shivdeep Lande, Vishwas Nangare Patil, Sanjukta Parashar, R. S. Praveen Kumar, Hareshwar Swami, Safin Hasan and many more names are there who have performed and many of them still performing their job appreciably and all these officers have created a kind of benchmark in their respective arenas and there might be many unsung heroes who have been silently performing their duties and playing quite vital role in strengthening the unity, harmony, and development of the nation in all respects. There are many arenas in the society where one can find many committed and sincere officers who have been doing well. In the same way, there are some business tycoons like Dhirubhai Ambani, Azim Premji, Nagavara Ramarao Narayana Murthy, Sudha Murty, Sudha Murty, Prem Ganapathy, Ramesh Babu, etc. who have achieved a big success and established their contribution as a renowned brand in the market of the globe. There is a legacy of teaching and teaching fraternity right from Lord Gautam Buddha to Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam in India, but still one can rightly incorporate the names of contemporary figures like Anand Kumar, Dr. Vikas Divyakirti, Alakh Pandey, Faizal Khan, Vimal Kaul, Arvind Gupta, Aditya Kumar, H. C. Verma, M. R. Khan, etc. who have committed their lives for the teaching and development of the students. These people are not just teachers who have educated their students but they have become national figures because of their extraordinary ideology and passion for teaching.

Besides, there are some other sectors like sports, culture, entertainment, social, politics, etc. in which one can find such figures that had started their journey with nothing and now they have everything. Indeed, it is very tough job to explore the gap between these two ends called ‘Nothing’ and ‘Everything’. It is notable that if one takes into account the journey of an individual who is successful in his life then it finds that his positivity, optimism or positive approach of looking towards life and goal plays vital role in his success and therefore every individual needs to develop such approach in his / her life to be successful. In this regard, Narayana Murthy once stated that “A person who is happy is not because everything is right in his life, he is happy because his attitude towards everything in his life is right” (Deogirkar,143).

*Twelfth Fail: Hara Wahi Jo Ladha Nahi* is the story of one of such officers who have come from the root of the rural India and cracked the toughest exam of the nation with the post of Indian Police Officer (IPS). This book is written by Anurag Pathak in Hindi and translated it into English by Gautam Choubey and Lalit Kumar in 2021. The foreword of this touching book is written by Vikas Divyakirti, the Founder-Directore, Drishti IAS Coaching Classes, New Delhi and the foreword of the book itself taps and calls the readers to go through the book. Recently in 2023, a movie, *12<sup>th</sup> Fail*, came which was completely based on the novel / biography *Twelfth Fail: Hara Wahi Jo Ladha Nahi* by Anurag Pathak. This movie was directed, produced and written by Vidhu Vinod Chopra, one of the most popular personalities of bollywood industry. Vidhu Vinod Chopra has made various required and cinematic changes in his movie in order to make it more effective and inspiring. The movie also extends a great moral message for the youth of the nation that the circumstances and barriers cannot stop from achieving the goal but one needs to have determination, patience, consistency and self confidence and this is what he tries to present through the movie and the protagonist, Vikrant Massey who plays the role of Manoj Kumar Sharma. Sachin Tendulkar appreciates this book and says, “This book will inspire millions of youth” (Pathak, *TF*, Front Cover).

Manoj Kumar Sharma, an IPS officer, courageously admits the vista of resuming his education and taking control of his future in an environment where millions of students take the most difficult competitive exam, UPSC. A renowned bollywood actor Akshay Kumar rightly notes down in his foreword that he wrote for Vishwas Nangre Patil’s English translated book, *Win All Your Battles*. He says, “This book is about the moulding and building of an IPS officer, just like the transformation of raw material into the final, refined product. It’s about the journey of a young lad who, with his serious determination, relentless consistency and ironclad dedication, is groomed into a seasoned policeman. It is a book about how a young boy with limited means from a humble village got selected for the elite police service....” (Kumar, ii). In the same way, *Twelfth Fail: Hara Wahi Jo Ladha Nahi* is the story of a young lad from a small village who cracks and achieves the designation as an IPS with his sincere efforts, dedication, consistency and sacrifices.

As far as life is concerned, it is the journey with different elements like happiness, sorrow, helplessness, hope, betrayal, frustration, ecstasy and many more. *Twelfth Fail: Hara Wahi Jo Ladha Nahi* is nothing but the fully loaded package of the journey of Manoj Kumar Sharm who experiences all such aforesaid elements in a very short span of time and still he does not stop. The novel is divided into fifty parts and each part has its own beauty and ecstasy. The reader does not leave this book until he/she completes it. It keeps the readers completely engaged and every chapter talks and rotates around the protagonist, Manoj Kumar Sharma, his life, hurdles, remedies, patience, consistency, hard work and success. Indeed, India is a country with diversity and there are two ends or binary oppositions like rich-poor, literate-illiterate, rural-urban and so on in almost all arenas of the society and the protagonist if this renowned piece of literature represents almost all structures of the society. Manoj Kumar Sharma was born on July 3, 1975 in Chambal, Madhya Pradesh, India in a poor family. This area of Chambal was known for dacoity in the past. The depiction of the family and social surrounding express the plight of the people residing there. Manoj Kumar

Sharma studies in twelfth standard and he prepares for his board exams and explores various tricks of cheating in the exams when novel begins. His school, 'Vidysagar Higher Secondary School' is situated in Jaura and it is thirty kilometers away from the district headquarters of Morena. He is the eldest son to his parents and he has a younger sister and brother, Rajni and Kamlesh. His father usually stays away from the family in order to earn money and once or twice in a year comes home and hands over some amount to fulfill the needs of the family. Manoj Kumar Sharma's mother somehow manages the routine and domestic needs of the family.

At the beginning of the novel itself, an educational system is criticized and its spoiled portrait is displayed through the character of Manoj Kumar Sharma and teachers. Manoj dreams and wishes to work in professions. Initially he wishes to be a teacher and he calls it as "Teaching is such a prestigious profession. If I ever land such a job, I'll be thrilled" (Pathak,TF,4). It shows the innocence of Manoj Kumar Sharma and his affinity towards noble professions. In spite of his background, territory and education, he dreams to be in a sound profession and it is the sign of a true combatant and aspirant who is ready to defeat anything in order to achieve his/her goal. Cheating in the exam is a general and common practice for the students and the teachers of the school also help them and ensure the smooth execution of cheating during the exams. Unfortunately, Manoj Kumar Sharma becomes the victim of this system and Dushyant Singh, SDM invades the exam center with his team and snatches away the notes, guides and all materials from the examinee. Narendra Singh, the manager of the school tried to settle down the matter but Dushyant Singh does not listen and continues his drill to conduct the exam in ethical manner. He scolds a lot to the students, teachers and manger as well. The manager of the school tries to manage the SDM with the help of one of his friends but receives a reply from him as, "Nothing can be done about him.....officers like him take pleasure in destroying well-established systems" (Pathak,TF,8). It is the moment, Manoj Kumar Sharma experiences the pathetic expressions of the inspector of Jaura in front of the SDM and the power of an officer influences Manoj Kumar Sharma. His wish of to be a teacher moves away and now he decides to be an officer like Dushyant Singh.

As far as Manoj Kumar Sharma is concerned, he does not sure about his career and future. He even does not know the different streams of careers and opportunities are available to him. His prime aim was to clear his board exam and proceed. It shows his innocence and poor awareness about education and career opportunities. He grows up in such circumstances where daily food was the priority and rest things are secondary to them. He cannot participate in a cricket match because he could not manage ten rupees and when he asks his mother about the same she says, "I have no money! Your father hasn't shown up in seven months; I have been borrowing to meet the household expenses!" (Pathak,TF,10). It shows the stark reality of his family but he does not stop and appears at the venue where cricket match is being played and performs the role of commentator and fortunately meets the S.D.M. who happens to be the Chief Guest. The S.D.M. appreciates his skills of delivering the statements and entertainment and says, "Bravo! You speak so well. What is your name?" (Pathak,TF,12). His participation in the match as a commentator and appreciation by the

S.D.M. boosts the confidence of Manoj and he continues his journey with optimism. He does not give the excuses for the obstacles which insistently come in his way. He always tries to seek a remedy over the obstacle and never distracts from the inner feeling of becoming and doing something good in future and this is the crux of his success and outstanding achievement in life.

Manoj's uncle, Shyamsundar, comes up with the news of Manoj's failure in twelfth standard. Manoj fails in all the subjects except Hindi and it seems that Shyamsundar becomes quite happy while sharing this news to Manoj's parents and in an ecstasy he says, "In Physics, Mathematics and Chemistry, he could not even touch double digits. In English, he has scored twelve out of fifty" (Pathak, *TF*, 14). Manoj deeply gets frustrated and weeps a lot at Hanuman temple. His friend, Rakesh tries to console him but Manoj says, "Mathematics beats me. How am I supposed to study?" (Pathak, *TF*, 16). His relatives like Shyamsundar never miss a single chance to humiliate and tease Manoj in front of the people. Manoj is hurt by such public insult and humiliation and due to considerable patience he does not say anything. After this blow of twelfth fail, Manoj did not have options and he and his brother, Kamlesh, decides to buy a tempo and serve the route of Chaira, Bharra, Bagcheeni, Morena. They buy a second hand tempo for forty thousand rupees and hand over two hundred rupees on the first day itself to their mother. She cries a lot but Manoj says, "What's to worry? Your sons have started earning now" (Pathak, *TF*, 19). These words and feelings of Manoj draw the attentions of readers and it shows that he has both the desires of continuation of his education and financial support to the family. Many times he thinks like everything is over but his inner will power and sincere wish to do hard work and sense of sacrifice do not let him live silently and he always acts and tries to do something. But simultaneously, obstacles do not leave him alone and they frequently appear in the series form. Both the brothers run their new business nicely and use different tricks to attract the passengers. Their rivals like 'Balaji Bus Services', cannot digest it and they trap both of them in the conspiracy and make their tempo confiscated with the help of police. The ray of hope disappears again and all the family gets shocked due to this unexpected blow. There was not a single person or authority to help them out and prove that they are innocent.

It was truly the series of obstacles and hurdles in the life of Manoj and his family which have been there right from the beginning but every time Manoj does not accept it as it is. He tries to react and do something in order to get rid out of it. This time also he thinks and finds the person who can help him and after consulting with his friend Rakesh he decides to meet the SDM and seeks help. But one needs to note the feelings and annoyance of Manoj when he narrates the story to Ramesh. He says, "Those who work hard to earn an honest living are put in prison. The police behave as though we are thieves or dacoits. Those with a fleet of buses and money in their pockets, do they own the road? Does a poor man have no right to ply his tempo?" (Pathak, *TF*, 22). It shows the agony and helplessness of Manoj. He aggressively expresses himself before Rakesh because he could not tolerate the injustice occurred to him and his brother. He's very much straight forward in his life and he does not know about the manipulation and injustice which are the obligatory elements of this contemporary society. This incident rightly proves and endorses the innocence and sincerity

of Manoj and it leads him to the success at the end of the novel. These incidents which occur in chapter five and six, openly depict the scenario of police administration, corruption and manipulation which are not the cup of tea for the poor and marginalized people like Manoj and his brother. Such people helplessly accept the injustice and bear torture and harassment in spite of being innocent. Such occurrences may create two kinds of streams, positive and negative, in the society and victims accordingly proceed or live their lives. It's up to the inner voice of the victims whether they survive silently with a lesson from the injustice occurred to them or get inspired and try to prove themselves in the society and people who manipulate and torture them. Manoj opts for the first choice and proves himself before the corrupt system, practical society, heartless people and aristocratic society. It is an instance for the youth who do not like to opt for the positive way to walk on. There are many examples in the society where youngsters commit suicides, choose anti-social way for living life and ultimately excuses that such youngsters give for it is their depression, isolation, financial position, joblessness, etc. But Manoj never walks on such paths and he always thinks positively and constructively as far as his aspiration and life are concerned and therefore he deserves to be called as the role model for the youth of the nation.

Manoj continues his journey with positive vibes and he approaches the SDM with his brother but does not share his wish and gets impressed the way the SDM explores the false case registered by the police officer and immediately gives justice to the victim and frame inquiry against the corrupt police officer. Manoj gives excuse and says that he came to meet him to have the career guidance and he wants to be like the SDM in future. Again, the stance of Manoj gets shifted and now he wants to be the SDM and not teacher or else. It is the moment where Manoj comes to know about the competitive examinations like Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commission (PSC) and the SDM guides him in brief about the examination and its pattern and all. Somehow, Manoj clears his twelfth standard and gets admission for B.A. in M.L.B. College, Gwalior, M.P. He comes in contact with the friends like Triloki, Vikas, Ravikant, Amit, Manish, etc. and he splits them between two groups as one is of those who come from villages and other is of those who are natives. He stays with Keshave in a single room near his college. He considers himself quite inferior and therefore hardly he participates in a discussion or chatting. Once, he answers the question based on Marxism which is asked by his principal in the class and he highlights the two streams of the society, rich and poor/ capitalist and proletariats, and his friend Vikas endorses themselves as proletariats. In fact, it is the phase where Manoj comes to know about the civil services and Indian Police Services from his friend, Amit Dikshit. Ravikant convinces Manoj the significance of English and insists him to opt it as an optional subject for graduation.

Manoj does not want to make a single compromise with his dream, aspiration and determination. He just wants to prove himself and achieve something exceptional in his life and accordingly he tries to find out the different ways with the help of people who come in contact with him. Keshave hates Manoj and he always tries to tease him in this way or that way. Once, Keshav goes to his village without informing Manoj. Manoj spends two days and night on the street of Gwalior with empty stomach and somehow makes it possible to have a meal from one of the hotels, SavitriBhojnalaya, in compensation with labour work for half

an hour. But the way he approaches the owner of the hotel is quite touching and emotional. He says, "I do not have money. Can I work for a meal?" (Pathak, *TF*, 41). This is the spark of sincerity that Manoj has and his sincerity and straight forward approach make him sensible and bold to tackle any blow and situation and therefore "he decides that he would not weep or beg for rescue, never ask friends for help. Manoj was convinced that success would come to him only if he dared to walk down the difficult path and not the easy one. He was beginning to experience an odd pleasure in facing adversities" (Pathak, *TF*, 41). He has innumerable obstacles but he never tarnishes his self respect. He believes in hard work and he might consider work as worship. In this regard, Swami Vivekananda rightly says, "When you are doing any work, do not think of anything beyond. Do it as worship, as the highest worship, and devote your whole life to it for the time being" (Vivekananda, 56). It seems that he walks with the ideology of Swami Vivekananda and never compromises with his self respect.

Manoj leaves Keshav and goes to stay with Tiwari Sir who is running spoken English classes. Manoj promises to share the half rent and look after all the domestic stuff. His intent was to have shelter in affordable money and to learn English from Tiwari sir. Manoj starts doing all the routine work at room and participating in the class to learn English. Everything goes on smoothly but it is said that misfortune nave comes alone, a girl named Mona from the class of Tiwari sir falls in love with Manoj and it cannot be digested by Tiwari sir and he asks him to leave the room as early as possible. Manoj clears his first year exam with fifty five percentages and participates in a camp for co-curricular activity organized by Vivekananda Kendra. He comes in contact with many intelligent and scholar friends and people there and he is appreciated as the best participant. Manoj is overwhelmed by the patriotic feelings and his responsibilities towards the society and nation. He takes an oath to work for the society and serve for the nation. He gets impressed with Rajneesh Tyagi, a Principal. He says, "I can achieve anything I want in life; I am filled with boundless strength there is no greater a faith than serving it. I have pledged that serving our nation shall be lifelong mission" (Pathak, *TF*, 51). It might be the phase where Manoj gets inspired with many different personalities and the spark of social commitment and sense of serving the nation might have been generated during the camp. In fact, Manoj already has many facets and potential in his personality and his personality might be strongly exploring a spark in the form of such camp which ignites those facets and makes him realize his hidden potential and abilities and today he has been serving as an IPS officer in Maharashtra.

After having participated in the camp, Manoj gets fascinated and indulged in the thoughts of Swami Vivekananda and his superb ideology, philosophy and literature. The social commitment, sacrifices, selfless approaches and services become the soul of Manoj. He does not think about anything except society and social services. But his friend, Rakesh, knocks at his ambition and tries to make him realize what he wants to be should never be kept aside and forgotten. Rakesh convinces him that he can serve the nation after becoming an officer too. In fact, all the officers are serving their nation in their own ways and he has to do the same things. Meanwhile, Manoj's father gets suspended with fake allegations and his father decides to fight with the system for injustice with him. He says, "I will destroy the deputy director. I won't admit defeat. I am an honest man. They are all corrupt; I'll take them

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to task. I have written to the prime minister too. Only the high court will get me justice” (Pathak, *TF*,55). After having experienced these kinds of sentences one can realize that he must be Manoj’s father. It might be his imparkation which is inculcated in Manoj and therefore Manoj also walks on the same path shown by his father. The entire family suffers a lot due to many issues but Ranveer Sharma, father of Manoj, does not want to listen anybody. Manoj also suffers a lot due to scarcity of money for his education but he also supports his father and gets impressed by his quest and fight for justice. This temperament shows that Manoj and his father respect the justice more than their lives and they can do anything for it and it is the true sign of the sincere and honest person.

Manoj also makes many compromises and continues his education with the help of quite less resources and support. He clears his second year with second class and focuses on the PSC preparation. He expresses his urge before Mukesh and he suggests the name of Deep Soni who recently clears the prelim of PSC. Both of them go to meet him at Peelikothi, a place where aspirants stay, in order to have his guidance. Manoj considers himself quite inferior after meeting him as far as his academic performance is concerned. Manoj appears for his first attempt of PSC after clearing the graduation with fifty five percentages. He wishes to join the scholars and aspirants at Peelikothi but due to the dearth of money he cannot go there. He suffers from high fever but cannot approach to the doctor because of money. He finds darkness everywhere and it leads him towards the threshold of frustration but does not quit. Many times he thinks to quit everything and go back to village but his inner voice does not allow him to do so. There is no support from the family as already they are suffering from various issues. Somehow, his friend Pandey manages a job for Manoj and takes him to Mr. Rajneesh Tyagi whom Manoj had already met during the camp and finally Manoj gets a job as a caretaker at ‘Sahitya Sabha Library’ with three hundred rupees salary per month.

This job of caretaker brings many opportunities to Manoj. He meets with many literary figures and spends quality time in reading various books. Manoj does not bother to work there and he deals with all sorts of works including care taking, cleanliness, etc. He feels happy to have such opportunity to live in a company of the books and wisdom. Meanwhile, his parents come to meet him. His mother becomes emotional to see the plight of her son but his father does not bother about it. Instead of showing empathy to him he delivers a lecture to respond his wife’s wish to help and support their son financially as, “Stop wagging your tongue. Clothes make no difference to a man’s character; an honest man will shine even in rags. And why fuss over food? Does that make us any different from animals who live to eat? A real man may starve, but keeps his soul intact. Do you have any clue about the challenges facing our country? Explaining these matters to you is like casting pearls before swine” (Pathak, *TF*,74). Manoj becomes serious after experiencing these kinds of statements delivered by his father. It is already stated that Manoj is the replica of his father as far as obstinacy, positivity, determination, fighting spirit, principles, patriotism, etc. are concerned. Manoj feels for a while that his mother is right and his father does not bother about his family and always thinks about the society, system, nation and all. But later on, he says that “..Papa has really gone mad. But I love my mad father. He is my hero”



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(Pathak, *TF*,75). It means, this legacy is come from his father and therefore he carries out those principles and values carefully in spite of having various troubles and hurdles in his way. He tolerates his insult, digest harassment but he never stops and it is the true sign of an aspirant who always thinks about his aspiration and aim. The manager of the library, Mr. Hukumchand also blames Manoj for stealing money and Manoj cannot bear this blame and leaves the job of caretaker at library and starts working at 'Ghanshyam Mill'. He does not listen to anybody and continues his work at the mill. One day his friend, Pandey comes to meet him and insists him to stay with him at Peelikothi.

Manoj accepts it and moves to Peelikothi with Pandey and resumes his journey for the competitive examinations along with the aspirants. He studies day and night without wasting a single moment. He involves himself completely in preparation. Meanwhile, the PSC results come out and an aspirant from Peelikothi, Deep Soni becomes the D.S.P. the results of prelim also come and unfortunately none from Manoj's group can qualify it. Manoj again goes into frustration and fails to explore the reasons behind this failure in prelim of PSC. He feels that it might be the end of his journey and he cannot proceed with his studies. The PSC is more difficult than he imagined. Unfortunately, the government suspends the PSC exams due to certain issues and it creates another blow in his life. He is already depressed and in addition to this the state government cancels the PSC exams. Now, Manoj becomes completely blank and he shakes from within. Fortunately, Anshu Gujjar, the D.S.P., comes and suggests all the aspirants to go for UPSC and leave PSC. It is the first occasion where Manoj thinks about UPSC and its preparation. Many aspirants show their reluctance and deny this suggestion given by Anshu. But Manoj, accept it and says, "We must keep marching down the road we have chosen for ourselves, '.....Either we perish or we prevail. We can't run away from the battleground. I will go to Delhi and prepare for the UPSC'" (Pathak, *TF*,90) . It was the spirit of Manoj. It is very difficult to imagine a twelfth fail guy who comes from a small village and lower middle class family, completes his graduation somehow with second class and now dares to prepare for the UPSC. It can be done only by a person who is ignited from within and sincere towards his/her life. It can be dared by a person who thinks more about the nation than himself/herself. It is the true temperament and personality of Manoj who does not want to quit easily.

Therefore, his consistency, sincerity, honesty, hard work and innocence create a new path when all paths get closed for him. This time, Anshu Gujjar offers ten thousand rupees to Manoj to get admitted in the coaching class. Manoj reaches Delhi and joins Vikas Divyakirti's 'Drishti Coaching Centre' and starts preparing for the UPSC prelims. He shares the room with Pandey. Manoj feels that he wasted much time to come to Delhi and join this coaching centre. But he becomes quite happy for being the part of such a coaching centre and the company of many aspirants who have already cleared the state services and now preparing for the UPSC. He appears for the UPSC prelims and tries to attempt the paper nicely. Once, Vikas sir conducts an exam over the content he taught so far and Manoj stands first in it. Vikas sir says, "This boy has the ability to clear the exam; he has secured the highest marks" (Pathak, *TF*,96). Manoj becomes hero in the class and his first rank increases his fan following. Meanwhile, the result of UPSC prelims comes and Manoj clears his life's

very first prelim exam in the first attempt. Manoj thinks that he has cleared the first step of UPSC and now he has to prepare a lot for the mains. When he goes back to the class he meets with a girl from Almora, Shraddha who was looking for the guidance in Hindi literature and the director of the class asks her to meet Manoj and discuss. Manoj falls in love with her in the first meeting itself. Their friendship flourishes and both of them come closer to each other due to similarity in temperament, principles, sensitivity and behavior. Pandey does not like their closeness and he exposes Manoj in front of Shraddha and tells her that he is twelfth failed guy. But it does not create any thunder in their lives and she gets motivated after dealing with the past life of Manoj. Both of them concentrate on the studies and hide their feelings for each other. The UPSC mains exam comes close and both of them depart for the respective places to appear for the same. This departure becomes very difficult for both of them due to feelings of love and attachment.

Manoj reaches Bhopal for his mains and stays with his friends Deep Soni, the DSP. He attempts the paper of English and writes a wrong answer due to his misunderstanding. The asked question was about 'Tourism in India' and he writes about 'Terrorism in India.' He scolds himself for his poor perception and approach towards English and loses his first attempt of UPSC mains. He also misses a lot Shraddha but does not dare to ring her. His friend, Pandey and all try to convince him but he does not listen and says, "Love is the inner force that inspires me to study" (Pathak, *TF*,111). He goes to Almora in order to meet Shraddha but he could not meet her as she was in Haridwar for her internship. He talks to her on phone and expresses himself in an emotional way. But she does not listen to him and tries to make him realize his priorities. She says, "At this juncture, except your career nothing else should come into your mind. One hardly gets a chance to write the mains and you left it midway. And instead of overcoming your weakness, you are loafing around in Almora, talking nonsense. Tell me, will you ever succeed in life if you continue to act so casually?" (Pathak, *TF*,127). Shraddha is a wise girl and she knows her priorities and accordingly she tries to convince Manoj. It happens so because Manoj never experiences this much closeness of any girls in his life so far and abruptly she comes in his life and Manoj likes her because of her innocence, sincerity and down to earth approach.

Manoj goes back and continues his studies and appears for his second attempt and he cannot clear it. Still he cannot forget Shraddha and her presence in his life. Her attachment and affection do not allow him to concentrate and prepare for the exams. His friends try their level best to convince him but in vein. Finally, Pandey takes Manoj to Rajneesh Tyagi to have some words of wisdom. Pandey introduces the topic to Rajneesh Tyagi and exposes Manoj. Tyagi understands the issue of Manoj and persuades him in his ways and gives some practical instances which have come from his experience. He says, "If there is love,....the question of distraction does not arise. Love makes one pure-hearted, puts one at ease, sweeps away negative thoughts, and enhances the powers of concentration. When one is in love, one does everything with renewed enthusiasm, pure joy, and single-minded determination....Let her not love him....that is the beauty of love. It doesn't require the other person to love you back" (Pathak, *TF*,141-42). It shows that the spiritual doses given to Manoj by Tyagi work out properly and it helps to release Manoj's frustration and isolation. Manoj becomes ready

for his third attempt and he leaves for Delhi. Simultaneously, he also comes to know that Shraddha also has completed her internship and now she also leaves for Delhi to continue her studies. They meet and talk positively about the future and career. They both like the company of each other and they enjoy it by keeping the ambition alive in their mind. When they meet Shraddha says, “We should give our 100 per cent.....success will definitely come our way” (Pathak,*TF*,145). Manoj’s friend Pandey was there to insist him to leave Shraddha and concentrate on the study. But Manoj does not listen and eventually Pandey leaves the room.

There are many situations and different circumstances which might have come in the ways of Manoj to test his determination. Manoj also successfully deals with all the blows and proves that he is the man of patience and many other requisite elements. The patience is not the only asset that Manoj has. He has positivity, sincerity, honesty, determination and kindness. There are many incidents in the novel which highlight all these facets of his personality and life. He pulls himself in the trouble in order to give solution to the others. There is one such incident when Manoj and Shraddha go to the Hanuman Temple where he finds some poor people from Bundelkhand and they do not have any job in Delhi and now they wish to go back to their home. They need one thousand rupees and they ask Manoj for the same. Manoj had only hundred rupees and immediately he hands over the same to them and promises them to give remaining nine hundred rupees soon. He convinces the priest of the temple to make an appeal to help the poor people and says “If you want to find God, serve man” (Pathak,*TF*,156) and immediately he collects the expected amount. His excitement, inner wish to help the poor people and positive efforts are being observed by Shraddha silently. This kind of act and deed performed by Manoj rightly proves that he is the man with kind heart in which only kindness is there and there is no place for hatred, misbehavior, dishonesty and anti-social deeds. In fact, there might be numerous instances of people who have switched their lives to anti-social deeds because of their poor social plight and scarcity of money in the society. But this is Manoj who never thinks about such anti-social deed and always tries his level best to give his best in all circumstances. It would not be overstated if it is said that he was much confident about his future and he knows it very well that his era is going to start soon. But it is very difficult to have such notion in mind and it is more difficult to maintain it for a long span of time irrespective of many unexpected hurdles and blows. It seems that Manoj genuinely is a sincere guy who has been struggling for his existence and his struggle and critical journey receive proper moral support from Shraddha and it helps him to face the blows and march towards his goal. As it is said that “Only those who can see the invisibles can do the impossible” (Ajebon, 10) and Manoj is the perfect instance of it.

Manoj finds himself well all the time but angst and blows never leave him alone. Since Pandey leaves him, he has not been able to settle properly. So, he decides to work as a cook and prepare a food for his roommates and aspirants and roam some pet dogs outside in compensation of eight hundred rupees. Manoj is a kind of aspirant who is ready to do anything for his survival in order to achieve his goal as an officer. He does not think about the job and its dignity or status. He needs money and shelter so he accepts all kinds of jobs

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and rivets himself completely. Manoj had some assured helping hands like Vikas sir but he does not approach him because of his self respect and sir had great expectations from him. He does not want to showcase his problems and issues and earn sympathy from near and dear ones. Even Shraddha once insists him to go to Vikas Sir but he does not. He says, “No I can’t discuss my problems with him. He has high hopes of my success. I don’t want to disappoint him” (Pathak, *TF*, 159). It shows his feelings for Vikas sir and he does not want to break his hope. It is the sign of a wise man.

Meanwhile, the pleasant news comes and Manoj and Shraddha qualify the prelims. Now it is Manoj’s third attempt and Shraddha’s first one. One of Manoj’s friends, Naval teases Pandey and says, “The one who is in love passed the exam and you failed. What do you have to say, Pandey?” (Pathak, *TF*, 167). They both give mains and wait for its results. In fact, Shraddha becomes the valid inspiration for Manoj and it is purely spiritual love. He does not afford her absence and she also does not tolerate his absence. They both love each other and their dreams as well. They are nothing without their aspiration and dreams. They give precedence to their examinations and aspiration and do not engross in love and other such things. It seems that it is their love which boosts them to achieve their goal as soon as possible so that they can spend time with each other for rest of the life. There are many occasions on the novel itself where Manoj expresses himself and confesses his spiritual love for Shraddha. The result of the mains comes and they both did not clear it. It gives pleasure to Pandey and he says that Shraddha is responsible for Manoj’s failure. Pandey humiliates him a lot in the presence of Shraddha. Manoj also gets angry with Pandey but he is helpless. It is very difficult time for Manoj to tackle these movements of failure. There is completely darkness in the family. Somehow he manages and prepares for the toughest competitive examination. But now he collapses from within and ponders over the coming days and his future. He does not want to leave Shraddha but he does not want to miss his aspiration as well. They both talk about Pandey and his humiliation. They do not like his behavior but Shraddha thinks that Manoj should also focus on the study only and she tries to convince him but Manoj does not listen and expresses his anger for Pandey.

The way they talk and exchange the dialogues between them, it really makes the readers emotional. They both talk about the pure feeling of love and how love can create barriers in the way of success. In fact, it is love which inspires him to achieve success. Manoj articulates his feelings and isolation. He feels quite helpless and asks Shraddha, “Who do I love? What do I love?.....Who loves me?.....if you do, why don’t you tell me?... Let others say whatever they want, I can’t imagine a life without you. Love is not a strong enough word to express what I feel. You are in my every breath, every thought.....Pandey says I’ll never get through UPSC exam. Am I that weak? Does love weaken us?..... I can change the world, let alone get selected for IAS or IPS if only I have the strength of your love” (Pathak, *TF*, 171). It is the first time where Manoj breaks his boundaries and expresses himself in such a lucid and straight forward way before Shraddha. She does not utter a single word. One thing is loud and clear that as Pandey humiliates Manoj and holds Shraddha responsible for Manoj’s failure, but Manoj thinks in a different way and he considers her as a powerhouse for his struggle and he can achieve anything if she and her love is with him. Shraddha also

understands his feelings for her but she does not express herself. But this time she cannot and she says, “Manoj Sharma, I love you very much and will do so till my last breath” (Pathak, *TF*,171). It is the moment when both propose each other and accept the feelings which have not been expressed since long. It is a kind of inspiration for Manoj and his last attempt of UPSC.

Manoj does not quit. He is very much optimistic towards everything. As P. B. Shelly says, “If winter comes...Can spring be far behind?” (Anand,25). He clears the prelims and starts preparing for the mains. He starts working on the mistakes he has committed in his previous attempts and he comes to know that without having proper coaching he would not be able to go through the mains. He approaches Vinay Singh sir and shares his financial plight with him. Manoj says, “Sir, I have no money at all..... Sir, I will never go through the mains without proper coaching. I promise once I clear the exam and get my first salary, I’ll pay your fee” (Pathak, *TF*,179). But he does not allow him to join his classes without fee and he himself gives him eight thousand rupees and asks him to deposit it to the cash counter and says, “I cannot deprive you of coaching just because you can’t afford it” (Pathak, *TF*,179). Meanwhile the result of prelims comes and all guys clear it except Gupta. Manoj speeds up his studies and focuses on developing the writing skills. He increases the number of pages writing from twenty to thirty and appears for the mains exam. Shraddha also leaves for Haridwar to attempt her PCS mains exam and Manoj attempts thirty mock tests which constructs his confidence. The result of mains comes and Manoj and Avinash clear it whereas Pndey and Naval could not clear it. Manoj was sure about his attempt and efforts he has taken but still he was bit nervous about the result and finally his nervousness and botheration move out. Gupta rightly states addressing Avinash, “You always said that those who prepare for civil services shouldn’t fall in love. But today, Manoj, who is madly in love, succeeded, while Pandey, who is miles away from love, failed” (Pathak, *TF*,184). It is the moment where Pndey gets angry from within. His mind is assailed by many emotions, anger, sorrow, jealousy, disappointment and a sense of defeat. He insists Manoj a lot to be away from Shraddha but Manoj did not listen and he achieves success with feeling of love for Shraddha and her kind, academic, spiritual and lovely company. In fact, it might be the beauty of true love or spiritual love which never allows people to defeat in their lives. Meanwhile, Shraddha also gets selected as Deputy Collector and she informs Manoj but Pandey’s jealousy and his negativity towards Manoj and Shraddha lead him to spread poison in their pious and spiritual relationship. He calls Shraddha’s father and shares everything about her relationship with Manoj. It is one of the major blunders created by Pandey. The way Pandey behaves with Manoj is not expected in friendship but Pandey cannot digest his failure and Manoj’s conquest and in order to take baseless revenge he intrigues in this way.

It is the crucial phase of Manoj and therefore Shraddha wishes to join him in Delhi to support him. But that call made from the stranger (Pandey) destroys her wish. She tries to convince her father but he does not listen. The moment comes when Shraddha expresses herself in such a beautiful way during her felicitation ceremony in her school; it makes her father to rethink about his decision and restrictions. Finally he allows her to join Manoj in Delhi. There Manoj, a twelfth fail boy, has been anxiously waiting for her and his interview.

His interview is just a day away and there is a storm of thoughts in his mind. He already took good coaching from Vikas sir and prepared nicely for an interview but the question of UPSC interview are always unexpected and nobody anticipates it. Manoj thinks that today he reached here at the threshold of UPSC interview because of many people and Pandey is one of them who has played quite vital role in his struggling journey. He feels to express gratitude towards all the guys who have helped him to achieve this phase of his life. Shraddha also joins him on the day before of his interview and when he meets her again he says, "You've arrived at the right moment. Ever since you entered my life, things have turned out well" (Pathak, *TF*, 197). He wishes to meet Pandey and says, "...I can never forget his contribution to my life. Without his generous support, perhaps I wouldn't have come so far....we should never abandon the person who supported us when we faced a crisis" (Pathak, *TF*, 198). Shraddha also becomes happy and appreciates herself for choosing Manoj as her life partner. The way Manoj expresses his feelings for Pandey and all the people who came in touch with him, who have supported him and contributed something to his life; truly shows that Manoj is a person with divine heart who never hates anyone in the world. They both go to meet Pandey and he still tries to tease Shraddha asks her what she'll do if Manoj fails in an interview but she says, "...if he fails, there are plenty of other opportunities. For me, Manoj is important, not what he becomes" (Pathak, *TF*, 198). Shraddha's answer stops dialogues and they leave. Pandey walks with them till Gandhi Vihar and confesses that he is the person who had called Shraddha's father but Manoj does not say much and leave.

The journey of Manoj and Shraddha tells a lot to the youth of today who have been struggling to achieve their existence in different fields and arenas of society and nation. Every individual has different perspective of looking towards aim, goal, love, responsibilities, expectations, life, etc. and accordingly he / she tries to behave and live his / her life. But as far as Manoj and Shraddha are concerned, it seems that it might be the plot constructed by the almighty that made them to meet and inspire each other to achieve their aspirations in an appreciative manner and as a result one becomes an IPS and other becomes an IRS. They fight, sustain and enjoy success together and hand in hand and it is the beauty of true spiritual love.

The day comes and Manoj and Shraddha arrive at the UPSC office. Manoj enters in the hall with great hope and nervousness. Dr. P. D. Mehta is the chairman of the board for Manoj and he was the former director of IIT, Delhi. Manoj comes to know about Dr. P. D. Mehta and his prejudiced approach towards non Engineering and non English medium candidates. Manoj gets rattled after dealing with the experience of the candidates who appeared before the panel. Manoj's turn comes and he appears before the panel. As he expected, the chairman of the panel humiliates him for his poor academic performance. He tries his level best to answer and justify his stance sincerely. When his interview gets over and one of the members asks him about his future plan if he is not selected then Manoj replies and it might be the genuine personality of Manoj. He says, "Swami Vivekananda's statement – "Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached" always inspires me. I'll not stop till I achieve my goal....Becoming an IAS-IPS officer, a teacher or a librarian can't be the aim of one's life; it shouldn't be. These are only means to achieve a larger goal, which is to serve

one's country with the utmost sincerity" (Pathak, *TF*, 208). The other members of the board might be impressed by this answer and this answer might have played crucial role in his selection as an IPS officer. Manoj does not cheat to himself and prefers to be sincere during the interview. He tried to present all the scenario of his struggling period but the chairman does not entertain him and keeps it aside immediately. It shows that still people are crazy for English language and consider it as a status symbol whereas it is mere a language of communication and not more than that. The students who come from the rural background are always considered as inferior comparing them with the students of urban. It does not stop here only. People differentiate even between the curriculums as well. The students who complete their primary, secondary and higher secondary education in ICSE, CBSE, State Board, etc. and students dealing with such boards in English medium are considered as superior and contrary to this students from the state boards with their mother tongue are considered as inferior. If such type of discrimination is being taken place during the personality test of the UPSC then what would be the future of such students and nation as well. The way Manoj makes his attempt of the interview and tries to express himself in a sincere manner shows his genuine qualities and core facets of his personality. He tries to prove that the language and its proficiency are not prominent in executing the administration or any structure; a person having all requisite facets without proficiency and sound command over a particular language can also run the administration smoothly. It might be Manoj's sincerity and straight forward approach with politeness from which the members of the panel got impressed and they have given the sincere, hard working, kind hearted and prolific officer to the nation.

Finally, the day comes, on 12<sup>th</sup> May, the final result of the UPSC comes and Manoj and Shraddha go to the UPSC office. Manoj does not dare to see his result so he sends Shraddha to confirm it. Manoj becomes panic during those five minutes which become like an age to Manoj. He becomes restless to see the expressions and reactions of the aspirants. Some guys come up with joy and laughter whereas some come with tears in the eyes. Finally Shraddha comes and Manoj asks, "What happened Shraddha? Tell me" (Pathak, *TF*, 210). She shouted, "Manoj, you have become an IPS officer!" (Pathak, *TF*, 210). It is the moment where the long struggle of Manoj comes to an end with the post of an IPS officer. People appreciate one's designation, status, and power but do not think about the struggle, sacrifices, patience, hard work and dedication behind his/her success.

To conclude, it could be said that it is not the only story of Manoj and Shraddha but they represent many of such aspirants who continuously fight and struggle to achieve success. They sacrifice many things and strive hard to achieve their ambition. But every individual is not that much lucky to have the partners like Manoj and Shraddha for each other. They are just made for each other. *Twelfth Fail: Hara Wahi Jo Ladha Nahi* is not just a novel or biography of Manoj Sharma but it is a master piece of inspiration which should be read by all those who have been struggling in their lives and who think that everything is over or who feels that there is nobody to help them, support them or guide them. It is the piece of literature based on a true story which teaches many lessons like how to love someone?, how to deal with different unexpected challenges?, how to maintain balance on

different emotional occasions?, how to control temper and win people's heart?, how to maintain and express the sense of gratitude?, how to be honest with yourself in all types of circumstances?, how to boost yourself to do something different from other?, how to carry out the responsibilities successfully?, etc. In fact, life is a journey with a final destination but before reaching to the final destination there are many responsibilities of the family, society and nation which are supposed to be carried out sincerely and successfully. There are innumerable figures who do so honestly and Manoj Kumar Sharma is one of them. As it is said that “उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत। क्षुरासन्नधारा निशिता दुरत्यद्दुर्ग पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति॥ (<https://www.jagran.com>), in the same way Manoj Kumar Sharma has not stopped until and unless he achieves success. He walked the ways which were with full of obstacles and blows but he knew that “The nicest thing about the rain is that it always stops. Eventually” (Adimulyo, 51). It means, the blows and troubles are like rain which stops voluntarily; one just needs to be patient and calm during rain. Manoj also knows it very well that these obstacles are the ways which lead him towards his goal and destination one day. Let's hope for the best and anticipate that many youngsters of our country will be inspired by reading *Twelfth Fail: Hara Wahi Jo Ladha Nahi* and tough and successful journey of Manoj and Shradha and our country will get honest, hardworking, loving, kind and conscientious officers like them in coming days.

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