

# Writing the **Future** We Deserve



## Why Queer Indian Stories Matter

A short guide to building  
the memories, knowledge and  
literature that represents us.



Every story expands  
our shared future.

 **QueerInk**



# **Writing the Future We Deserve**

**Why Queer Indian Stories Matter**

**June 2026 Edition**

**Shobhna S Kumar**



## WRITING QUEER INDIA

Why Queer Indian Stories Matter

First Digital Edition: June 2026

Published by Queer Ink, India

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### A Note on Accessibility & Design

What if reading and writing didn't have to be a struggle against a standardised page? The literature we need requires *all* of our voices. To support the diverse ways our minds receive, process, and generate language, this entire guide has been designed and formatted using a dyslexia-friendly typeface and layout to create total reading ease, lightness, and clarity for all neurodivergent and dyslexic creators. You belong in this ecosystem.

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# **Why We Need More Queer Indian Stories**

For much of modern Indian history, queer lives have existed in a paradox. We have always been here, yet many of our stories remain difficult to find.

Our histories are scattered across personal collections, unpublished manuscripts, community newsletters, oral memories, court records, family albums, and conversations that were never written down. Many lives have been lived fully and courageously, yet remain absent from the bookshelves, libraries, classrooms, and public records that shape how societies remember themselves.

This absence is not simply a literary problem.

**It is a problem of memory.**

When stories are not documented, future generations inherit an incomplete understanding of who came before them. When experiences are not recorded, important knowledge about survival, resistance, love, friendship, family, community, and belonging can disappear.

Shobhna S Kumar

Over the past decade, significant progress has been made. More books about queer India exist today than ever before. Yet the body of literature available remains remarkably small when compared to the queer population and the diversity of queer lives across the country.

There are still countless stories waiting to be written.

At Queer Ink, we believe that every new story expands the collective understanding of queer India. Each memoir, novel, oral history, essay, poem, or research project contributes to a larger cultural record that future generations will inherit.

The question is not whether enough stories exist.

**The question is whether enough of them are being documented.**

## My Notes



## **What Does Queer Indian Literature Look Like?**

When people think about queer writing, they often imagine coming-out stories, romances, or personal memoirs. These are important. But queer Indian literature is much larger than any single genre or experience.

It includes stories about family, faith, migration, work, friendship, ageing, disability, caste, language, education, health, activism, art, entrepreneurship, and everyday life.

It includes fiction and non-fiction. Poetry and scholarship. Personal testimony and historical research. Oral histories and graphic narratives.

Books can emerge from a grandmother's memory, a community archive, a doctoral thesis, a personal journal, a collection of letters, or a conversation recorded over tea.

The future of queer Indian literature will not be built by a handful of authors writing about a narrow range of experiences. It will be built by thousands of people

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documenting the complexity of their own lives and communities.

### **Stories Needing Representation:**

- Queer lives outside major cities
- Faith, spirituality, and sexuality
- Disability and neurodiversity
- Queer ageing
- Regional language experiences
- Workplace and professional life
- Chosen families
- Relationships across generations
- Migration and displacement
- Histories of local communities and organisations
- Everyday experiences that rarely appear in books

No single writer can tell every story.

**But every writer can help ensure that more stories are told.**

# **Five Ways to Begin Writing**

Many people believe they need a complete book idea before they begin writing. In reality, most books start much smaller. They begin with a memory, a question, an observation, or a desire to understand something more deeply.

## **1. Begin with Memory**

Think of a moment you return to repeatedly: a conversation, a relationship, a place, a turning point. The moments that remain with us often contain the seeds of larger stories.

## **2. Begin with a Question**

Many writing projects begin with curiosity. What do you wish someone had told you when you were younger? What part of your history feels undocumented? What experiences are missing from the books you have read?

### **3. Begin with a Conversation**

Some of the most important queer histories begin as conversations. Talk to elders, friends, community members, and family members. Listen carefully. Ask questions. Document what you learn.

### **4. Begin Small**

A powerful essay can become a memoir. A research article can become a book. A collection of interviews can become an oral history project. You do not need to begin with the ambition of writing a book. You only need to begin.

### **5. Begin Before You Feel Ready**

Almost every writer experiences uncertainty. Confidence rarely arrives before the work begins; more often, confidence is built through practice. The act of writing creates the clarity that many people believe they need beforehand.

## My Notes



## My Notes



## Publishing as an Ecosystem

Traditional publishing often focuses on a single outcome: producing books. While books remain important, we believe that meaningful literary ecosystems require more than publication alone. They require spaces where stories can be discovered, developed, preserved, shared, and sustained.

This understanding has shaped the evolution of Queer Ink. What began as an independent publishing imprint has grown into an interconnected ecosystem that supports queer knowledge in multiple forms:

- **Publishing:** Supporting books that document and imagine queer Indian lives.
- **Archives:** Preserving personal and community histories that might otherwise be lost.
- **Digital Library:** Improving access to queer literature, research, and cultural resources.

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- **Public Programmes:** Creating opportunities for conversation, learning, and knowledge exchange.
- **Swabhimaan:** Supporting queer writers to develop sustainable and self-directed creative practices.

Together, these initiatives reflect a simple belief: Publishing is not only about producing books. It is about creating the conditions through which knowledge can flourish. The stronger the ecosystem becomes, the more opportunities exist for stories to emerge.

## My Notes



## **Building the Future We Deserve**

The future of queer Indian literature will be created by writers who decide their stories matter. By readers who support independent publishing. By researchers who document forgotten histories. By archivists who preserve fragile records. By community members who share their memories. By people who choose to contribute their knowledge, creativity, and imagination.

Every generation inherits a cultural record. Every generation also has the responsibility to expand it.

At Queer Ink, we see publishing as a collective project of cultural creation and preservation. The books we publish today become part of the histories that future generations will encounter. Whether you are a writer, reader, researcher, artist, educator, archivist, or simply someone who believes these stories deserve to exist, there is a place for you within this work.

**We must build it together.**

## Continue Your Journey

*How to shape the future of your writing and queer Indian Literature*

You do not need to be a published author to participate in this work. You can begin today:

- **Read Widely:** Seek out books, essays, oral histories, research, and creative work by queer Indian authors. Every reader helps sustain the ecosystem that makes new stories possible.
- **Document What Matters:** Record family histories, community memories, personal experiences, photographs, letters, and conversations. Today's everyday materials often become tomorrow's archives.
- **Support Independent Publishing:** Buy books, recommend them to others, request them through libraries, and share them within your communities.

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Independent publishers survive because readers choose to support them.

- **Preserve Community Knowledge:** Many important histories remain vulnerable to loss. Consider how the stories, records, and experiences around you might be preserved for future generations.
- **Encourage New Writers:** Some of the most important stories are never written because people believe their experiences are not significant enough. Encourage others—and yourself—to begin.
- **Share What You Know:** Whether through writing, teaching, mentoring, research, conversation, or creative practice, every act of knowledge-sharing contributes to a richer understanding of queer India.
- **Stay Curious:** The story of queer India is still being written. There are histories yet to be uncovered, voices yet to be heard, and futures yet to be imagined.

The literature we need will be built one story, one memory, and one act of documentation at a time.

## My Notes



## What Else is Possible for Your Creation?

So often, we approach writing and publishing from a place of heavy expectation, assuming it has to be a gruelling, difficult process. What if it didn't have to be a struggle against traditional limitations? What if bringing your book into the world could be a space of total ease, choice, and joyous creation?

Whether you are holding a completed manuscript or simply carrying the spark of a new idea, your project is asking to be contributed to.

We invite you to select a time on our website's booking calendar. Let's drop the rules of how publishing "should" look, step beyond the gatekeepers, and explore what your voice actually requires to come alive. Let's see what we can unlock together.

*Writing the future we deserve: Book your free 30-minute session with Shobhna*

## My Notes



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