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"It all started harmlessly enough. My friend Suchitra Sastri and I were chatting away one Sunday afternoon when she moaned about how there were so few libraries in Chennai. I said 'Yeah, so what do we do?' And she said, 'So let's start one'. It was as simple as that," says Amrutash Misra, the man behind iloveread.in.

It is not every day that former IITians leave well-paying jobs at MNCs to start ventures purely out of passion. But Amrutash and his teammates did just that. Their mission: To get more people to read.

Walking down the aisles of a popular book store in Chennai, Amrutash says, "If you notice, these people are displaying books that they want Chennai to read. That is because they take a huge cut from these books. Bestsellers, for example, find prime display while graphic novels get least preference." And true, it is a task to spot the graphic novels section at this store. This is where this library comes in. One can borrow as many books as they want, two books at a time.

A purely self-financed venture, they have a tie-up with atyourdoorstep.in for their delivery. Also, it is an IIT-M start-up so they have professors from the college helping them out. Amrutash says that his experience at Hindustan Unilever Ltd., especially the rural stint, also helped him when he started off on this venture. And why the switch? "It's not that I didn't like my job. I just found something better."

Amrutash claims that his favourite books are the works of Roald Dahl, The Little Prince, White Tiger, Great Gatsby, Midnight's Children and Love in the Time of Cholera.

"Reading in India is elitist," says Amrutash. "I remember how the person who designed our logo once argued that there is nothing that books would give that television and documentaries wouldn't. I gave him a couple of books and today, he reads more than me."

Their target audience is pre-teens, teens and young adults and their message is simple: Reading is cool.

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