

A Life In Trans Activism

A. Revathi, Nandini Murali

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A. Revathi's memoir *The Truth about Me* became a sensation in India when it was published in 2011. The pathbreaking autobiography told the story of Revathi's childhood uneasiness with her male body, her exile to a house of *hijras* (the South Asian term for trans people) in Delhi, and her eventual transition. Now in her second book, *Revathi: A Life in Trans Activism*, Revathi opens up once again, telling the story of her life as an activist.

In the Thiruchengode temple, with the hills of the Ardhanareeshwara as her backdrop, Revathi begins a conversation about what it means to live on the margins of society. She shares stories about her life working for the NGO, Sangama, which helps transgender people, and her remarkable journey there from office assistant to director. She describes her research into the lives of those who make the transition from female to male identity; her efforts to provide a voice to those who do not fit the gender binary; and her travels around the world to discuss the community's experience. Revathi also sheds light on her decision to quit Sangama and continue her struggle as an independent activist—including her collaboration with a theater group performing a play based on her autobiography.

As told to Nandini Murali, *Revathi: A Life in Trans Activism* provides insight into one of the least talked about subjects in our society—from the point of view of a person most qualified to talk about it. This is a rare and searingly honest account of Revathi's life—on both sides of the gender binary.



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