

PRODUCERS OF WEB SHOWS NOW FIND SCRIPTS IN BOOKS

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Film-makers in India have largely drawn inspiration from foreign movies, sometimes copying them frame by frame. That's changing and in the brave new world of web series, as producers are increasingly adapting books in search of new content.

Last month, producer Sheetal Talwar announced he had bought the rights to Shashi Tharoor's book *Why I Am a Hindu*.

Earlier, a producer could easily plagiarize a Western film and adapt it for the local audience, Talwar said. "But now the globe has shrunk

BOOKED TO THE WEB

Forthcoming web series, which are based on books

- Names involved
- Platform

SELECTION DAY
Anil Kapoor
Netflix



THE SCAM
Sameer Nair/Applause Entertainment
Undisclosed



THE BARD OF BLOOD
Shah Rukh Khan, Emraan Hashmi
Netflix



INDIA'S MOST FEARLESS
Sameer Nair/Applause Entertainment
Undisclosed

WHY I AM A HINDU
Sheetal Talwar
Undisclosed



thanks to social media and you can't do that any more. So the next best option is to buy books and adapt them." In the past year, producers have acquired the rights to adapt

several books.

Streaming site Netflix has announced plans to adapt sports drama *Selection Day*, spy thriller *The Bard of Blood*, dystopian novel *Leila* and Sal-

man Rushdie's classic *Midnight's Children*, after its success with Vikram Chandra's crime thriller *Sacred Games*.

For the rapidly evolving web space, book rights are a

gold mine. "Unlike films, where a majority of projects work on a single-line idea and the star power of an actor, the web allows you to switch off the moment you're bored," Talwar said. "Web platforms have completely democratized consumer viewing. So it becomes all the more important financially to be able to tell stories where you know there is a hook."

Content studio Applause Entertainment has bought the rights to several books: *India's Most Fearless*, a take on surgical strikes by India; romantic thriller *Marry Me, Stranger*; non-fiction business book *The Scam* and short story compilation *The Goat Thief*.

"These are creative deci-

sions based on audience and platform insights," said Applause Entertainment chief executive officer Sameer Nair. "All genres of literary content have potential to be adapted to screen. Language is another element that plays a pivotal role. There is also a huge appetite for narratives in local languages and there is some terrific local language literature that is presently untapped."

Girish Dwibhashyam, head of content at video streaming service Spuul, pointed out that for long, feature films had been churned out from popular books. Anurag Kashyap's crime docudrama *Black Friday* and Arjun Kapoor and Alia