

## **In October by Default** \_A Short Story

Three years ago, on a Sunday morning I was reading an English daily in my room. I came across an advertisement on a national level essay competition organized to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's fifty fifth death anniversary. Listening to my natural inclinations I decided to write something on the given topic "*Why did Gandhi die?*"

I already had a couple of good books on Gandhi and India's struggle for independence, which I had read in parts. I collected some more literature to support my writing.

The whole process of reading and making points was over within eight days. To my surprise the essay was ready in just three days that followed. After all it wasn't more than one thousand words, was it? I made all the required refinements and posted a neatly written copy to the editor of the newspaper. Not to my surprise, I did not win a prize for that effort. I even forgot to check the contest result.

About a year later, purely to overcome boredom I watched a movie on Gandhi, nearly three hours of breathtaking recreation of history. That prompted me to collect more papers on Gandhi to correct my facts. It really helped to brush up a rusted, idol memory device. However, it did not last long. The repaired device of mine had almost no chance for it to be seen atleast once in a while.

Two years went by, and by chance I watched another modern confidence building movie [CBM] on Gandhi in a city theatre. I came home thinking about similar events in my past.

My half-baked quotes for an essay on the Mahatma, and the movies made on him told me,

*"Gandhi died, perhaps because he was surrounded by people who did not know what he stood for, by people who needed contests and movies to think...."*

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October 5, 2006