



The Delivery Rider is India's Greatest Hero

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The delivery rider is India's greatest hero.

Not film hero.

No slow-motion entry. No six-pack lighting. No background dancers appearing from a tea stall.

Just helmet, raincoat, phone mount, petrol fumes, one insulated bag, and the full emotional weight of my decision not to cook.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

Let us be honest.

I had ingredients.

Onion. Tomato. One chilli. A pan. Some amount of self-respect.

Then evening came.

The body sat down. The brain dimmed its lights. The stomach opened negotiations.

I opened the app not to order, just to look.

This is how collapse begins.

Fifteen minutes later, one man on a bike was carrying my lack of discipline through traffic.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

Look at what the rider faces.

Speed breakers with no warning.

Potholes with local confidence.

Rainwater pretending to be road.

Autos rejecting geometry.

Buses breathing heat.

Dogs holding committee meetings near the divider.

Some uncle reversing with only vibes and no witnesses.

And somewhere above all this, my phone says:

Your order is delayed by 4 minutes.

My order?

Brother, a human being is fighting three traffic signals, one wet flyover, app pressure, customer impatience, and a pizza that has started losing structural faith.

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The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

And we become monsters.

Tiny, hungry monsters.

We watch the dot move.

Why is the dot not moving?

Why did the dot turn left?

Why is the dot near petrol bunk?

Why is the dot living its own life?

The rider calls.

Location, anna?

I say, come straight, then left, then small right, then near that building, then opposite one shop, then ask watchman.

Beautiful.

GPS has resigned.

Cartography has fainted.

The rider says, okay anna, with the calm of a man who has heard worse nonsense before dinner.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

Then comes the gate.

Apartment security has entered boss level.

Which flat?

Name?

Phone number?

Why food?

Who ordered?

Go basement.

No, go lobby.

No parking here.

Call customer.

Customer does not pick up because customer is watching little dot with spiritual attention but somehow ignoring actual call.

The rider waits.

Food waits.



Hunger becomes accusation.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

And customers have demands.

Please bring change.

Please come fast.

Please don't call.

Please call when near.

Please leave at gate.

Please come upstairs.

Please don't ring bell, baby sleeping.

Please ring bell loudly, I am inside bathroom.

Please get extra ketchup from restaurant that packed the order nineteen minutes ago in another pin code.

We are not customers.

We are weather events with coupon codes.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

And then there is rain.

Rain changes everything.

Rain on helmet. Rain inside collar. Rain on phone screen. Rain making maps drunk. Rain turning lane into soup. Rain making every brake light look like a warning from God with weak electricity.

Still the rider comes.

Meanwhile, I am upstairs, inside, dry, tracking progress with the seriousness of a control tower and the courage of a wet biscuit.

Order late.

Shame also late.

But arriving.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

Let us talk about ratings.

Five stars. Four stars. Three stars.

As if the rider's entire battle can be reduced to my mood when the fries arrive slightly tired.

Was the food hot?

Was the rider polite?

Did the delivery meet expectations?

My expectation was that dinner would teleport.

That was unreasonable.

The rider is not magician.

The rider is a person with knees, fuel, time, sweat, rent, phone battery, possibly back pain, and ten more orders stacked behind my craving.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

And yes, there is exploitation here.

Let us not wrap guilt in peri-peri fries and call it appreciation.

Convenience has a rider ID.

Discount has a spine.

Free delivery is never free for the person getting rained on near the signal.

Every time I say, just order, someone else says, where is parking?

Every time I say, I am too tired, someone else climbs stairs with my laziness packed in foil.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

Still, when the rider arrives, there is a small ceremony.

Helmet lifted. Bag opened. Steam released. Name checked. OTP given.

For one second, two strangers meet around hunger.

I say, thank you, anna.

Sometimes too softly. Sometimes while already smelling food. Sometimes with guilt that should be bigger but is distracted by biryani.

The rider nods.

Already leaving.

Another dot waiting to become dinner elsewhere.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

So here is my small prayer— no, not prayer, my small request from one lazy citizen with a fork in hand.

Tip when you can.

Answer the call.

Give the location clearly.

Don't punish the rider for the restaurant's cold samosa.

Don't make someone wait downstairs because you are busy choosing which plate looks less embarrassing.

Don't write rude instructions in the notes section like hunger has made you emperor.



The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

Because the delivery rider is carrying more than dinner.

He is carrying our late nights, our bad days, our office fatigue, our exam panic, our heartbreak meals, our family fights, our rain laziness, our “I cannot cook today,” our “I deserve something hot,” our “I will be a better person tomorrow.”

Tomorrow, of course, we order again.

But tonight, when the map says arriving in two minutes, remember:

that is not a dot.

That is a man cutting through heat, water, horns, rubbish, wrong turns, and our collective inability to make dinner.

The app says arriving. The road says good luck.

When he reaches, do not treat him like the last step of the transaction.

Treat him like someone who fought the whole city so your stomach could stop making speeches.