Saved by my books . . . !

Hi, Everyone! I shall give an instance why I call my book-buying decision a life-saver.

Picture the scene: I had been editing—and re-editing—my manuscript forever. I had already re-submitted it to Trafford twice. There should have been no more corrections—in an ideal world. But alas! That was not the case. My greatest fear was that there would be at least some tiny fact I had not double-triple checked. Cold fingers clutched my heart daily at the thought.

I had read my manuscript so many times . . . ! I felt I would scream if I had to do it once more—and yet read it I did.

It was while my tired eyes were scanning the pages—*for the last time*, I prayed to God fervently—that my eyes fell upon the words ‘550 Princely States.’ These words I had written *many* months ago and had not bothered me for the ‘n’ number of times that I had read the manuscript.

But that day, I couldn’t move on. Just where had I got that number 550 from? This was the question that started buzzing in my brain.

It was past 10 p.m., z-z land was beckoning invitingly. But there was no resting for me. I went quickly to another life-saver—the Google search engine. To my horror a variety of numbers popped up for the Princely States, but not a one was 550!

What now?

This is where my books came in handy. I rushed to the six or seven books that had likely coughed up that number for me. I perused once—twice—and again, but with no luck.

It was another of those moments when I could sink my head in my hands and cry.

Just in time a ray of hope shone through the darkness before my eyes. Along with the books I needed for my novel, I had also bought several books that I didn't need but thought would be interesting to own. One such was V. P. Menon's *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*. I started hunting for the book in the sea of books that I have and found it after a few tense moments.

Finally, I found the number of the Princely States in there—562! V. P. Menon's word was good enough for me and I duly made the changes in my manuscript.

But the horror of the close-call has not yet left me, I can tell you. Saved by my books I was, for sure!

Toodle-oo,

Anurupa