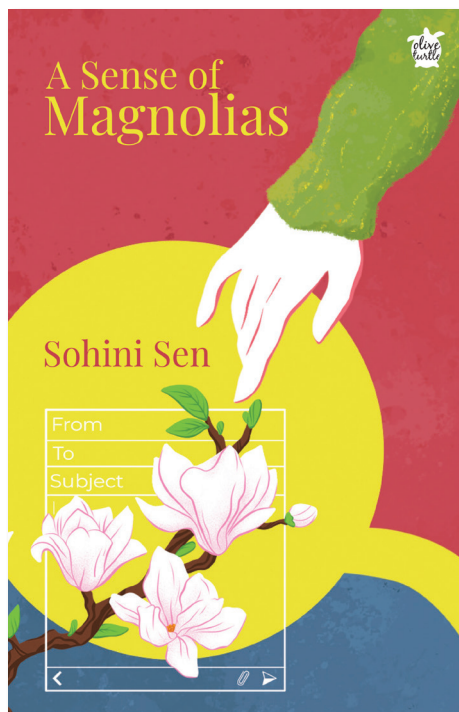




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## A Sense of Magnolias

Sohini Sen

**Unexpected love blooms through heartfelt emails and distant, yearning dreamsemails and distant, yearning dreams**

A narrow corridor smelling of damp plaster, cigarettes and stale food was the last place where he would dream of finding love. It was a job interview, after all.

Yet, his lasting memories from that morning were of her complexion like the flowers on his magnolia tree, her hauntingly beautiful eyes filled with pain, her longing for the Himalayas.

And an email ID that did not reveal her name.

So he wrote to her of what he knew best: his home in a small Himalayan village, his childhood. His cat.

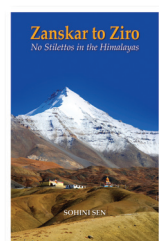
Running like a gentle rivulet through every email was his understanding of the deepest of all human emotions: love. A love infinitely patient. A love that flowed into the cracks of your heart till it was shining and whole again. But in a world suddenly brought to its knees by a scourge, would he ever find her again?



**Sohini Sen** has been an editor with *The Telegraph*, and the Kolkata head of the technical communication group of a global IT consultancy firm. Now a full-time travel writer and photographer, instead of chasing deadlines, she gets chased by camera shy yaks, and was once ceremoniously kissed by a dolphin. She has also had the unique experience of seeing three Rafflesia flowers in bloom. She loves the Himalayas and longs to live among them some day.

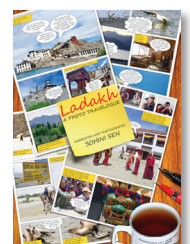
Sen is the author of *The Talking Table and Other Stories* (2012), *Yatra Pathe Rabi* (2014), *Ladakh: A Photo Travelogue* (2016), *Zanskar to Ziro: No Stiletos in the Himalayas* (2017), *Invincible City* (2023) and *A Drop of Golden Sun: Representing Tagore's Gitanjali* (2023).

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A chance encounter at a job interview brings about an evocative connection between two strangers. She leaves him just a cryptic email ID, and no promises to respond. Yet, he writes to her every day, each email laying bare a love that one could come home to, forever. Then one day, he stops, bringing her world to a halt. How can you be so deeply in love with someone's words? How do you search for someone who gave you his heart, but not his name?