To begin with, I'm grateful for that moment of uncertainty when I approached Lakshmi for advice. She was the one who put it to me that all a lab needs are four walls and an enthusiastic boss. And I second that today.

This thesis is a long way from those days when I did minipreps with borrowed solutions in borrowed glassware. And I've enjoyed every minute of the building-up process we went through. As in every other journey towards a PhD, this one also has passed through some very long days, very short nights (the excuse for my perpetual drowsiness), lots of failure and frustration, many moments of helpless confusion, flashes of panic and not to forget those thrills of anticipation, those triumphs and the times of near skepticism at one's own good fortune.

It is with pleasure I remember that each of the ‘above mentioned’ were shared by Jyotsna. I have been very lucky to have a boss who had given me the reigns of this project but had never ceased to share the responsibility. The lessons on science and life, I learned from her will not be forgotten in a hurry. And if you find these pages of acknowledgement a little befuddled in comparison to the scientific parts of this thesis, it is probably because she hasn't edited it.

Many other names and faces come before me when I wonder how time flew so fast. How very few times have I missed home in these years.

My batchmates, Shanti, Satya and Ruchi, with whom I've shared many a noisy laughter and preposterous jokes.

Satya, who transformed from an intolerant co-lab-ratter to a good friend, has always been there when I needed help and sometimes when I did not need his advice.

Ruchi, who was there at times when I didn't even know I need someone. Her last minute rescue operations when I almost gave in to panic, an example that comes to mind is our last minute dash to the railway station early morning after a night of heavy partying.

Krupa, who's had a calming effect on many of my panic reactions in the lab and has conducted numerous a rescue operation e.g. when the gel cracked, leaked or simply ran too smoothly to be believed! Towards the end, when I realized she's no longer around for me to run to and when others started running to me--was a time of revelation (of my aging process, or gaining wisdom, as I'd like to believe).

Pratik and Sridhar have been strong pillars to lean on when I needed them. Sattu has been an unconditional friend always cool as a cucumber, ready with a balm or advice or his atrocious PJs.

PJs in CCMB have never been a scarcity. Pratik, Sattu, Ashwin and many others have kept my facial muscles working. We provide proof for the theory that you don't need reason to laugh. You can always create them as you go- an art Puneeta excels in when her imagination runs riot. Not to mention the role of EW II Flr Comedy Club, ‘ing Ramkumar, Suchitra, Jagreet and Bhavna. With Kulanand gone, a major source of entertainment (when he's trying to be entertaining and even when he's trying NOT to be) has departed, for the greener pastures. But he has many uses in the said pastures, as half the facts in this thesis (which were just beliefs on my part) could be backed by references thanks to his prompt supply of pdfs.
Apart from laughing the other major pastime that I have indulged in is arguing. And that’s mostly thanks to Ajay who’ll spark off some argument, getting me into shouting pitch and then will sit back to enjoy the spectacle of me making a fool of myself.

Those heart-to-hearts I’ve had with him also have been very self-illuminating and enjoyable. With Jagreet also I’ve bared my soul many a cool winter night during those midnight coffee breaks.

**JD lab has been an enjoyable place to work in-Ram** with his incisive scientific mind and encyclopedic (at least so it seemed to me) knowledge of cell cycle. Suchi and her calm confidence with which she has rescued me from quite a few nightmarish mousy experiences. And Sindhu, who has allowed me to bully her at many times and who has injected the god-no-god debates into the lab that added colour to life. Anand, who has always met my sometimes unexpected, short-notice demands and who has helped maintain the lab in a semblance of working order.

Those discussions with Sanjeev and Ruchi have honed my scientific thinking. Anindya’s advice hopefully had some effect on my presenting abilities although I most emphatically deny any effect Satya’s might have had.

Working in a closed environment, dependent on so many people, a thesis becomes the product of co-operation and help from many quarters.

Among those are the tissue culture gang of very helpful people (Dayakar, Isra, Chandramohan and Ramesh) headed by Johnson who have met the ‘weird whims’ of the JD lab without flinching.

The instrumentation who have lent help in so many crises. Bapi Raju deserves a special note of gratitude if not for anything, for just being available and always trying to sort of the latest ‘situation’.

Meher, who with great efficiency provided the primers I requisitioned for, so much so that you can’t use her laxity as an excuse for not working. Niyaz and Nagesh who have done a great deal of sequencing for me in those days of suspense and excitement when I didn’t know the identity of the genes I had pulled out (sometimes the sequences were a bigger surprise than expected, of course!).

Khalid and the Photography, Giri and Nageshwar Rao in the Digitalis. Mallesh and Prakash at the Xerox, who have a special role in reproducing this (irr?, hope not)reproducible thesis.

Dwarkanath and others at the Animal House.

The drivers in the transport section who have ferried me over to the hostel at late hours and given me company in my expeditions to the Apollo hospital at the other end of the world.

And all the others in this campus thanks to whom I have been able to get something done in the last few years and those who have brightened my day by solving my problems or sometimes ‘merely’ with their smiles.

My thanks to the two Directors, Dr Balasubramaniam and Dr Lalji Singh, who have shaped and maintained CCMB in the last few years making it a place conducive to work in.
Dr Swarnalata and her staff at the Apollo Hospital have been very accommodating and helpful during my sojourns with their Cryostat.

Dr Shubha Tole- it was extremely kind of her to offer me her advice and the time in her lab, where I struggled with the RNA in situ, under her guidance.

Shashi, has been generous with advice and recos whenever I approached him.

To the two people to whom I owe more than just this thesis (a meagre drop in the ocean of my self), who have made me, moulded me and loved me. I hope there are other ways in which I have given them happiness (will keep trying to, too) than with these few words at the end of this section. And Vivu, who has been part of my growing up and who seems to have gone on ahead of me and has left some indelible marks on my psyche.

I acknowledge University Grants Commission for the Research Fellowship, which saved me from starvation in the last five years.

I thank the American Society for Cell Biology for the Pre-doctoral Travel Award, which enabled me to attend their 40th Annual Conference at San Francisco and present my work there.