Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the many people who have supported and encouraged me during my Ph.D. years.

First and foremost, I like to thank my guide, for giving me the opportunity to work in her lab. Ma’am was a guide in the true sense of the word. An adventurer at heart, she allowed me my own little adventures on the bench and to make my own mistakes, which in the end allowed me to discover how much I love science. She has been an endless source of insight and wisdom about scientific methods and scientific integrity. Ma’am is an extraordinary mentor, filled with a rare combination of alarming brilliance and quiet grace. It has been a privilege to learn from her.

I have always revered ‘sir’, Prof. Sujoy Kumar Das Gupta whom I have known from my M.Sc. days. Just a phone call and I would land up at Bose Institute where there was sir, always ready to help. I would like to take this opportunity to thank sir for everything.

I sincerely acknowledge Prof. Dhrubajyoti Chattopadhyay, ProVice-Chancellor (Academic) of CU who extended a helping hand whenever approached. I always had butterflies in my stomach whenever required to meet sir at his chamber. A signature or a simple nod; and I always came out smiling.

Apart from them I owe gratitude to University Grant Commission, Govt. of India for supporting me in pursuing research through these years.

I would like to express my earnest gratitude to Dr. Sagarmoy Ghosh, Prof. Maitree Bhattacharya, Dr. Anirban Siddhanta, Dr. Sanjay Ghosh, Dr. Geetanjali Sundaram and Dr. Anindita Seal for their kind help during this tenure. Prof. Susanta Roy Chowdhury (IICB), Prof. Sampa Das, Dr. Subho Chaudhuri and Dr. Pallab Kundu (Bose Institute) and Prof. Partha Saha (SINP) have always extended their help whenever asked for.

My association with this lab started during the M.Sc. project days. I owe those days to my namesake, Ayan Da. It was he who taught me to hold and handle a micro-pipette. Amit Da (Dr. Haajra) and Manas Da were always happy to help.

Then of course there was Senjuti Di. She was less of a lab senior more of an elder sister to me. I can never forget her little acts of kindness. She was that huge umbrella under which I felt very comfortable. She with her ‘little grey cells’ was always there with a
solution for the numerous academic and non-academic problems I faced. Unfortunately, I can’t think of a suitable word to thank her.

Sandip Da (the golden voice), Avijit Da (my Guru on the rocks) and Bikram Da (the coolest impressionist): they were my lab seniors who, however, never made me feel that. I could discuss anything; scientific, non-scientific as well as unscientific with any or all of them. They always listened when a cup of tea was not sufficient to alleviate the occasional blues. I was extremely fortunate to have had them as my ‘seniors’.

Thinking about contemporaries, it’s Sudip that comes to my mind. A diligent scientist, he has always been so inspiring. Having known him from our M.Sc. days, he is a perfectionist and a loyal friend. Not only academics, we were partners in crime even during the ‘prank sessions’ in the lab.

Debapriya Rajlakhsmi Das (yeah that’s the name of a single person) apart from being a true botanist, has one gem of a heart. Time and again she has indirectly showed me how much one can compromise for others. Scientific dissections and critical debates with Avishek, Anindya and Anindita have always been immensely fruitful and enlightening. Sohini’s infectious energy and enthusiasm, Monolina’s insatiable thirst for knowledge, Kanchan’s nimble mind and Madhurima’s persistence helped me, directly or indirectly, all through the way. Last but not the least; I am grateful to Suman for his help in navigating the day to day labyrinth of university administration. Big thanks to all of you for everything and above all for tolerating me in the lab ;). All of you made this the ‘bestest’ lab.

I acknowledge all seniors and contemporary scholars of the Departments of Biochemistry, Biotechnology and Microbiology especially Dibyo Da, Amrita, Amit, Kausik, Rajarshee, Kuntal, Tanusree, Amlan Da, Dhritiman and Arghya. Dibyo Da was the only person who could help me out whenever DNA refused to listen to me. I should also thank Amit for helping me out with the immuno-localisation experiments. Soumita, Sourav, Prithwiraj, Soniya, Dipan and Adrita also deserve a ‘thank you’.

Finally, thank you Kuldip Da, Samar Da, Chiranjib Da and Sandip Da for the help you extended. Thanks to Asim Da, Mrinal Da, Seuli and Swarup of Bose Institute.

Ayan Dutta