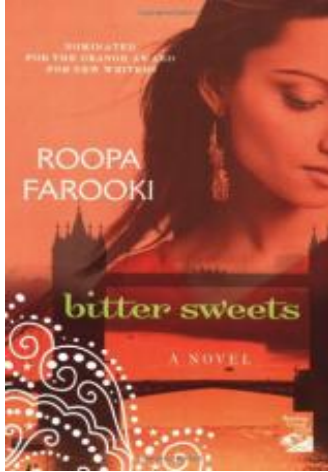


Bitter Sweets

by Roopa Farooki



About the Book

With this spellbinding first novel about the destructive lies three immigrant generations of a Pakistani/Bangladeshi family tell each other, Roopa Farooki adds a fresh new voice to the company of Zadie Smith, Jhumpa Lahiri and Arudhati Roy.

Henna Rub is a precocious teenager whose wheeler-dealer father never misses a business opportunity and whose sumptuous Calcutta marriage to wealthy romantic Ricky-Rashid Karim is achieved by an audacious network of lies. Ricky will learn the truth about his seductive bride, but the way is already paved for a future of double lives and deception --- family traits that will filter naturally through the generations, forming an instinctive and unspoken tradition. Even as a child, their daughter Shona, herself conceived on a lie and born in a liar's house, finds telling fibs as easy as ABC. But years later, living above a sweatshop in South London's Tooting Bec, it is Shona who is forced to discover unspeakable truths about her loved ones and come to terms with what superficially holds her family together --- and also keeps them apart --- across geographical, emotional and cultural distance.

Roopa Farooki has crafted an intelligent, engrossing and emotionally powerful Indian family saga that will stay with you long after you've read the last page.

Discussion Guide

1. Is a lie told in love acceptable or still deceitful?
2. What is the most damaging relationship in the **Bitter Sweets**, both to itself and the surrounding family?
3. Which character do you empathize with the most in the book and who do you feel is the most selfish?

4. Is an affair acceptable if the two people involved are genuinely in love? Take a moment to discuss the theme of faith and faithfulness in **Bitter Sweets**.

5. Which relationship do you think has the best hope for the future?

6. Did you expect the **Bitter Sweets** to end the way it did? In what ways did meet, or even exceed, your expectations?

Author Bio

Bitter Sweets

by Roopa Farooki

Publication Date: September 30, 2008

Paperback: 384 pages

Publisher: St. Martin's Griffin

ISBN-10: 0312382065

ISBN-13: 9780312382063