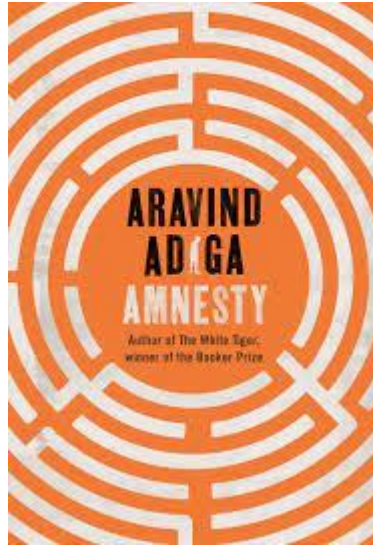


Shruti Yadav* : Review of *Amnesty* by Arvind Adiga



Amnesty by Arvind Adiga

Picador (2020), ISBN: 978-93-89109-43-6, Pp 256, ₹ 699

Arvind Adiga was born in Madras (now Chennai) in 1974 and grew up in Mangalore, South India. He studied at Columbia University in New York and Magdalen College in Oxford. His articles have appeared in publications such as The New Yorker, Sunday Times, Financial Times and Times of India. His first novel, *The White Tiger*, won the Man Booker Prize for Fiction in 2008. Its publication was followed by a collection of short stories in the book "Inter Murders". His second novel, *The Last Man in the Tower*, was published in 2011. Her latest novel, *Selection Day*, was published in 2016.

From the best-selling, Man Booker-winning author comes a gripping, tense and exuberant novel about a young illegal immigrant who must decide whether to report crucial information about a murder - and risk deportation. The novel is set in Sydney and revolves around Dhananjaya Rajaratnam, a Tamil Sri Lankan immigrant - popularly known as Danny - who overstayed his student visa and consequently became an illegal immigrant. She manages to work part-time at a grocery store and cleans the homes of privileged Sydneysiders. For four years, Danny has fought a constant battle to "belong", whether it's practicing an Australian accent, separating from his Tamil or Sri Lankan, or making his hair blonde. He also gets help from a stable relationship with Sonja, a vegan Vietnamese nurse with a mind of her own. But his world is rocked when Danny learns that Radha Thomas, one of his former clients, has been murdered. Notable signs surrounding the death point to a killer Danny knows. As the suspicions grow stronger, the young man faces a difficult choice - to remain silent and choose a life full of hope and dreams, or to confess even at the price of deportation. Limiting the events of the

book to one pivotal day, Adiga deftly navigates Danny's journey as he grapples with his situation.

“Rich Asians and poor Asians don’t seem to talk to each other, and that’s how Australians make most of their money.”

The novel takes place throughout this one day in Danny's life.

"But whoever did it, and for whatever reason, one thing was almost certain. The killer was a citizen.”

The story honors the thoughts and difficult decisions that immigrants, especially illegal ones, make during the day. It raises questions about responsibility and explores the standards of humanity. Danny's flashbacks and encounters throughout the day also illuminate his own prejudices against legal immigrants and citizens.

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