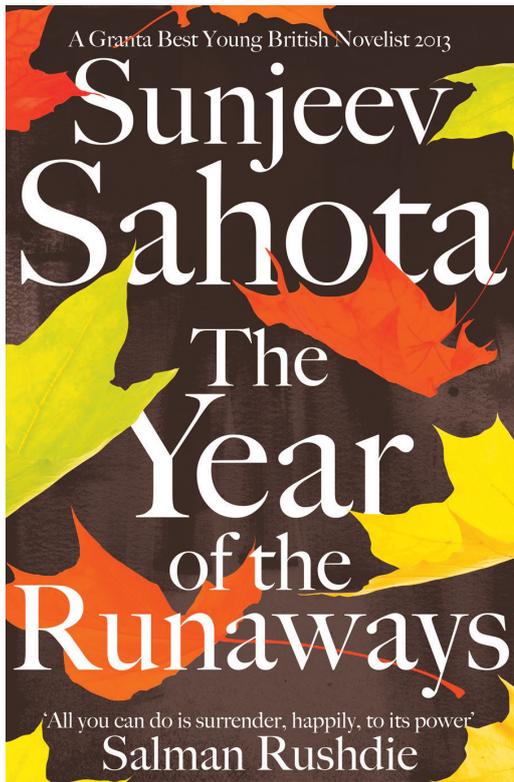


Reader's Guide



Other novels by Sunjeev Shahota
Ours Are the Streets (2011)

The Year of the Runaways Sunjeev Shahota

Picador

www.themanbookerprize.com

#FinestFiction



About the author

Sunjeev Sahota was born in 1981 in Derbyshire.

His debut novel, *Ours are the Streets*, was called 'nothing short of extraordinary' *Observer* and 'a moral work of real intelligence and power', *The Times*. Sunjeev is a Granta Best of British Novelist 2013.

The Year of Runaways

Three young men live in a house in Sheffield, each in flight from India and in desperate search of a new life. Tarlochan, a former rickshaw driver, will say nothing about his past in Bihar; Avtar has a secret that binds him to protect the chaotic Randeep. Randeep, in turn, has a visa-wife in a flat on the other side of town: a clever, devout woman whose cupboards are full of her husband's clothes, in case the immigration men surprise her with a call.

Sweeping between India and England, and between childhood and the present day, *The Year of the Runaways* is a story of an unlikely family thrown together by circumstance.

Discussion points

In what ways does Sunjeev Sahota transport to the UK the tensions and differences in background of India's caste and class politics?

Do you remain sympathetic to the three main characters even after they have committed crimes and taken advantage of others?

The Year of the Runaways alternates between shorter chapters about the four characters in Sheffield and longer-length sections about each of them prior to their arrival there. How effective is this structure and what impact does it have on the reader?

Would you categorise *The Year of the Runaways* as a reactive, political novel?

Did you find the epilogue, which takes the story 10 years forward, satisfying or did it leave unanswered questions?

Themed reading

Aman Sethi *A Free Man*
Henry Roth *Call it Sleep*
Jhumpa Lahiri *The Namesake*

Useful links

www.themanbookerprize.com
<http://www.picador.com/sunjeevsahota>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05zgjw5>