

Gold Coast Book Lovers

It's all about good books...

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March 2024



The book we read in March was *The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida*, by Shehan Karunatilaka, the winner of the Booker Prize in 2022.

In Colombo in 1990, the protagonist is Maali Almeida, a gay, gambling war photographer. He has woken up dead in what seems like a celestial government office – perhaps like a short-staffed Tax Department. His dismembered body is sinking in the Beira Lake, and he has no idea what has happened. He has seven moons allocated to him to solve his “murder mystery” and enable his photographic evidence to influence corruption in the Sri Lankan government.

Our group had incredibly disparate opinions of the book. One reader was so enthralled with the magical realism that a score of 5/5 was given: “Its depth and breadth, its vivid colours and flashing movement, lush scenery and gorgeous descriptions, its wonderfully drawn characters and strong narrative arc all make it an immersive and compelling read”. Others could not get started, or gave up because “it was disjointed, with so many characters and

elements that never really came together cohesively." All readers in the group reacted to the "unrelentingly violent and graphic descriptions of the appalling atrocities of the war, by JVP, Tamil Tigers, Indian army, and murdering mobs as well as the casual everyday violence and corruption of Sri Lankan politicians and police, public servants and individuals." Although these horrors pervaded the text, so too did the poetical language, often delivered with a cynical sense of humour. Most of the readers agreed that the innovative concept and the playfully descriptive language were outstanding.

For those who want to read a deeper analysis of the book click [here](#).

Ratings were from 2/5 to 5/5 with general responses of "loved it" or "hated it". There was no "take it or leave it" response here. This was a book very worthy of discussion.

With thanks to Group members who so kindly shared their responses, and to the Internet.

We look forward to seeing you again at our next meeting 6:30pm on Tuesday 9th of April 2024, **Room 2.1 in the 2nd floor of the Robina Community Centre**, when we'll talk about ***The Language of food by Annabel Abbs***. Hope to see you there and Happy Reading!

The 2024 Reading List can be found in the sidebar, or below if you're on your mobile device.

Other Books We Read

March 2024

Homo Deus by Yuval Noah Harari, 3.5

The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman, 3

Cakes and Ale by Somerset Maugham, 4.5

Sunlight and shadows : writers in the south of France by Julia Carter, 3.5

Marzhan, Mon Amour by Katja Oskamp, 3

The Annual Banquet of the Gravediggers' Guild by Mathias Enard, 4

The Beekeeper of Aleppo by Christy Lefteri, 4

The Book of Fire by Christy Lefteri, 3.5

Wifedom by Anna Funder, 4

This Plague of Souls by Mike McCormack, 3.

Flourish by Antonia Case, 4

Small things like these by Claire Keegan, 4

Oh William by Elizabeth Strout, 3

Unruly by David Mitchell, 3.5

The Vulnerables by Sigrid Nunez, 4

Hello Beautiful by Ann Napolitano, 3.5

The Song of Achilles by Madeline Miller, 4

I Don't by Clementine Ford, 4 and 3

Treasure and Dirt by Chris Hammer, 3

Murder at the Vicarage by Agatha Christie, 3

The Moving Finger by Agatha Christie, 3

Cold Enough for Snow by Jessica Au, 3.5

Go As a River by Shelley Read, 3.5