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# A Moment Comes



## Synopsis

Before India was divided, three teens, each from wildly different backgrounds, cross paths. And then, in one moment, their futures become irrevocably intertwined. Tariq. Anupreet. Margaret. As different as their Muslim, Sikh, and British names. But in one moment, their futures become entirely dependent on one another's. While the rest of India anxiously awaits the upcoming partition that will divide the country into two separate religious states, eighteen-year-old Tariq focuses on his own goal: to study at Oxford. But for a Muslim born and raised in India, there is no obvious path to England—until Tariq is offered a job translating for one of the British cartographers stationed in India, tasked with establishing the new borders. Margaret, the cartographer's daughter, has only just arrived in India. But already she has discovered it to be hot, loud, and dull. She can't go anywhere alone for fear of the riots and violence. Eager for a distraction, she finds one in Tariq. But it's Anupreet, another member of the staff, who has truly captured Tariq's eye. She's strikingly beautiful—but she's a Sikh, so not someone Tariq should even be caught looking at. And yet he's compelled to—

Against the backdrop of the nearly forgotten history of the partition of India, Jennifer Bradbury, as if with strands of silk, weaves together the heart-pounding tale of three teenagers on wildly different paths, on the verge of changing each other's lives forever.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 770L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 288 pages

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Best Sellers Rank: #225,521 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #22 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Tolerance #27 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Asia #55 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Violence

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up-As India stands on the brink of partition, three young people's lives become increasingly entangled with the upheaval and violence that surround them: Margaret, a British cartographer's daughter; Tariq, a Muslim teenager employed in Margaret's household who dreams of studying at Oxford; and Anupreet, a young Sikh girl also employed by Margaret's family. Although initially resistant to living in India, Margaret is soon enraptured with the culture. Tariq captures the interest of both Margaret and Anupreet, even though a relationship with him would be disastrous for either girl. He is pressed to join his family in what will become Pakistan, and although Margaret's father discourages him, he is convinced that an Oxford education would be the best for his future. There are multiple narrators, but each character's story is defined and intertwines with the others' seamlessly. Historical background of postcolonial India is neatly inserted within the narrative, and market and street scenes teem with everyday life. The awkwardness the protagonists feel about interacting with one another is honestly and realistically drawn. Characters are fully fleshed out and are sympathetic in their struggles to find themselves within the new India. Back matter includes a glossary and an author's note detailing Bradbury's personal connection to India and a brief overview of the partition. As clashes continue between and within India and Pakistan, this title fills an important niche in YA historical fiction.-Jennifer Schultz, Fauquier County Public Library, Warrenton, VA

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Set in India in 1947 on the eve of the partition that will create the country of Pakistan, this novel charts the interconnected lives of three teenagers. British Margaret is the daughter of a cartographer who is drawing up the boundaries of the new country; Tariq is a Muslim who is employed as the cartographer's secretary; and Anupreet, a Sikh, works as a maid for Margaret's family. Tariq is determined to become a student at Oxford. Anupreet is simply trying to survive in a dangerous time, when Muslims and Sikhs are in an undeclared war with each other. And Margaret, who has left behind a small-scale scandal in England, is beginning to adopt Indian ways, much to her mother's horror. Bradbury's story, told from the alternating points of view of the three teens, does an excellent job of creating a setting that is at once vivid and dangerous. The ending is both abrupt and improbable, but the three characters invite sympathy and will hold readers' attention to the last page. An excellent book for classroom use. Grades 7-12.

--Michael Cart

Using the perspectives of three young adults--a Muslim male, a Sikh female, and a British female--Bradbury builds a story about the partition between India and Pakistan. The characters are believable, the story interesting, and the placement in history realistic. It provides a glimpse into a part of history that may not be well known by people in the Western world, particularly.

This book is a great read and wonderful for not only teens and young adult, but everyone. Loved Bradbury's other books too.

A different type of novel. Wonderful characters and storyline. Third book for this author. Great writer who has a bright future.

I picked this book up because I have an abiding fascination with all things Indian. I'd read Bradbury's *Wrapped* last year and, while I definitely enjoyed learning about the little-known Victorian fad of mummy unwrapping, I found the story itself to be fluffy, and the characters too modern. So my expectations for *A Moment Comes* were limited. I ended up pleasantly surprised. This book exhales a wildly different and complex culture, full of life and bursting with sensory details, but tense with the fear of a country on edge. No one is safe, nothing is certain. The characters are detailed and believable as humans living in their time and place. And, once again, Jennifer Bradbury carved her story out of an underexplored bit of history. Another positive point is that the romance is kept to a minimum. Admittedly, what there is of it includes a love triangle and appears to be largely the result of raging hormones. But there is also a fair amount of more interesting manipulation taking place. It's all believably written but clean, and by the end of the book each of the three main characters has a much more respectful, less objectifying relationship with the others. I'm hoping Jennifer Bradbury writes another historical fiction novel soon!

Source: Received an e-ARC from the publisher through Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review. After taking some classes on Indian history, I discovered that I have a deep fascination for the country and its history that is not often sated in YA fiction, which so often focuses on American or fantastical worlds. Luckily we have books like this, a more serious offering from the author of *Wrapped*, the historical MG/YA. What first caught me about this book is its setting during the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, a situation whose repercussions are still felt today in seemingly

unending conflict between the two bodies. I knew vague factoids about the situation but this story places you on the ground with Sikhs and Muslims battling over territory but also thankfully highlights the good of people stepping up to do the bit of good that they can do. This is demonstrated in the form of our three narrators: Muslim Tariq, craving to study at Oxford; Sikh Anupreet, a beautiful girl confined to her home to protect her from the violent angry men around her; and Margaret, the British daughter of a cartographer come to divide India who meets the previous two when they are hired as servants in her family's household. I did not read the summary very closely as it clearly states that these three would be followed so I was surprised to meet the three as narrators. Each chapter lists the narrator so it is easy to keep track that way although the personalities, wants, and desires of all three are so different that it would be simple to do even without (it is appreciated still.) Probably what I liked most about this was how everything kept building. The circumstances became darker and more violent, everyone became a bit more desperate until the great climax of these ordinary people stepping up to do what they could despite the odds. In the author's note, Bradbury writes a little about this and I loved how she brought that theme out. I do think there could have been a bit more depth into the religious, racial, and gender issues of the time, especially for people who are not familiar with the period. Still there are a few books to reference mentioned in the author's note that I think it would behoove me to check out so as to further enlighten myself. Overall: A very well-done historical novel about a time not very well-known to modern American audiences.

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