



A Beautiful Lie

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Reviewer:

[Nicholas Tucker](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

Set in India in 1947 just before partition, this debut novel tells of teenager Bilal who is intent on hiding the truth about the impending disintegration to come from his dying, ever-idealistic father. Deeply affectionate towards his parent, Bilal also frets about living a lie, even going to the extent of printing a bogus newspaper for his father to read that puts an optimistic slant on events that are clearly doomed to go the other way. Initially supported by his friends, Bilal sees this group also starting to break up as religious hatreds grow and the voices of tolerance are drowned out. So much, so powerful, with the final pages crackling with the violence and hatred that were to kill so many. This story is well written but has a tendency towards repetition accompanied by passages of over-explanation. Bilal's many friends are not always clearly defined, but the boy and his father come over touchingly, sharing a loving physicality in their relationship unknown in our own more hands-off culture.

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