

A twin novel surprise from Benyamin! 'Al Arabian Novel Factory' and 'Mullappoo Niramulla Pakalukal' are two novels set in the backdrop of Jasmine revolution that took place in Arabia. How does a revolution come about? Who decides its time to upend the status quo? Does one ever feel ready for a revolution for a change that would transform lives permanently? Is it easier to write about a revolution when you are situated at a comfortable distance from its epicentre or to read about it years later tucked away in the cocoon of vantage point? The inaugural winner of the JCB literary prize Jasmine Days written by Benyamin and translated by Shahnaz Habib tackles some of these questions as it sets out to explore the life of a radio jockey caught in the midst of the Arab Spring. All is seemingly fine until one sect of Islam decides to rise in rebellion to avenge the oppression that deems them second class citizens in a land that is also rightfully theirs. Benyamin dissects the politics of freedom and revolution and how even the best of intentions quickly rot away to give rise to personal greed and a generic hatred towards the slightest of differences. He doesn't mince his words as he rips into the rhetoric that justifies protests which have misdirected opponents and battles that choose individuals as their targets instead of the corrupt systems at the heart of oppression. Paperback As a Malayali who has always claimed of detesting her malluness I found myself cringing and even getting stung by the Frank depiction of Mallu apoliticalness and the eagerness of mallus to otherise people and isolating them by speaking in Malayalam in the presence of a non-malayali. The main character was not convincing in action and character while living in an extended Pakistani family home she seemed to get away with murder and her actions and reactions throughout the novel made her at best immature if not totally unlikely. Paperback Why should you read this:-Fluid conversational style narrative that doesn't make itself complicated at any point-Diverse characters multiple views-A chance to form your own opinion after considering all sides-A plot that gets intense with every chapter makes you anticipate the worse and delivers exactly that. Finally a book worth the hype and all! \*Highlights: \*Relatable scenes and situation \*Well related facts \*Historical details well highlighted \*Arguments/discussions well presented regarding the constraints between the different sects of the concerned community \*The hardships and sacrifices faced by the common men in the name of such riots & issues \*The writing style is remarkable \*The sequence well maintained \*The plot is gripping and based on well researched prevailing relevant topics \*A much needed book today to be read by one and all! \*Subtle humour well inserted in midst of chaotic scenes \*All kinds of emotions well portrayed in between the lines I can so relate with the main protagonist Sameera with all her perfections and imperfections \*However I cannot find the title relevant. The story is set in an unnamed city in the Middle East and covers the riots that take place under the garb of politics nationalism religious conflicts and the Arab Spring revolution and the physical and mental trauma that ensues. The occupied protests of a suppressed religious majority ultimately led to a quick brutal response from forces loyal to the ruling Al Khalifa monarchy and everyone in the capital city of Manama was caught up in the conflict: Sunni versus Shia Indian versus Pakistani native versus immigrant young versus old. Paperback Benyamin (born 1971 Benny Daniel) is an Indian novelist and short story writer in Malayalam language from Nhettur Kulanada Pattanamtitta district of the south Indian state of Kerala: Both novels depict the same issue narrated by two different people from the same place but with different perspectives. This twin wonder is interconnected and at the same time independent with Beniyamin touch മുല്ലപ്പൂ നിറമുള്ള പകലുകൾ | Mullappoo Niramulla Pakalukal Revolution, Sameera Parveen the RJ in question is a Pakistani immigrant living in an unnamed country in the Middle East. She lives with her baba (father) in 'Taya House' the temple of rehabilitation for all the people related to her father's eldest brother, Sameera's baba comes to live with his brother and when he saves enough money he calls his daughter too to support his earnings, Sameera's work brings her in contact with many other immigrants who are merely foreigners at the mercy of His Majesty the ruler of the unnamed country. As is the case with dictatorships elsewhere here too the ruler commands obedience through the creation of fear. People have no choice but to submit to his will to ensure a safe livelihood for

themselves, Ali Sameera's colleague from her workplace is an active participant in this fight against injustice: Sameera thinks she understands his plight his anger until she finds herself embroiled in the conflict in unimaginable ways. Sameera Parwin baffled me by her immense strength and had me swear and cry towards the end of the book, After my chance stumble on Benjamin's book Goat Days I was dying to read another book by him. Reading Jasmine Days seemed like it was written by someone else possibly because it was a different translator: There are good bits and Bollywood bits I was thankful for a very convincing and probably true scenes of an Arab Spring revolution that turned into a sectarian feud: The maintenance of the regime and the revenge of the monarch were eye opening: 5 Gathering my thoughts for now but a brilliant read for sure: Paperback



One of the best written novels ever! This has easily become one of my fav reads of the year, I will not forget the characters ever; the scenes the dialogues the riots and the protests the killings and the misunderstanding that are still prevalent today regarding the Muslims. This book has been narrated in such a simple yet powerful way that it was impossible for me to put it down until I reached the last page, But this book is going to be one of the most unforgettable reads ever! \*Recommended, I will not talk much in detail about this book as I myself need to do a lot of research regarding many issues mentioned in the book: It will not be correct to assume things just because this book is a fictional work. It's just that I loved the idea about this book the writing style and the characters, 5 stars Jasmine Days is a beautiful hard hitting book which hits you at the right places, Jasmine Days is set in the background of the Arab Spring revolution and the story is told through Sameera a Pakistani immigrant who works as a RJ in Orange Radio, Her daily life revolves around squabbles with the 'Malayalam mafia' and her extended family in Taya ghar: She narrates her story to a character named Javed whose identity is not revealed. Her best friend is Ali Fardan who introduces her to his music group String Walkers: Ali and Sameera's friendship grows stronger with music and they chat on various topics including freedom identity issues and the feeling of being an outsider in the City: When the revolution grips the city Ali and Sameera find themselves entangled in it: Ali bears the brunt of being a 'second class citizen' in the country because he belongs to the Shia community, Sameera tries to make sense of this revolution and her own conflicts to a point where she has to choose between friends and family, Set in an unnamed Middle Eastern city which you can easily identify as Manama in Bahrain this is a very bold book, This book gets intense with each page and the end makes you sit back and think: Sameera is a headstrong girl who has an independent voice but I wasn't very happy with her character development towards the end: How some circumstances force people to change is written with glory. There is so much we don't know about the Middle East! I learnt a lot from this book. However I would've liked a better ending it didn't give the feeling of closure it felt rather abrupt, Paperback Jasmine Days tells the story of Sameera as she gets accustomed to living in a Middle Eastern city with her father and relatives, This shift away from home and her new job as an RJ brings her closer to assimilating with people of different backgrounds, Her friendships take on new definition when the city gets torn apart by religious conflicts, In this contemporary fiction the author draws up a raw and gritty picture of the effects of communal tension and violence: This novel surpassed my expectations and grew on me rather quickly with its unusual style of narrative and the subject matter it dealt with, Politics and religion are not themes that make for an easy read but Jasmine Days has the power to keep you

hooked to its pages, The apprehensions of being an outsider the inevitable culture shock and the patriarchal notions concerning gender roles are all aspects of the plot seen through Sameera's perspective: The style of writing in this translated work is crisp and not flowery, Many disjointed events and instances are strung together to form the overall story. Themes of corruption religious intolerance women's rights and protest culture are explored in this novel: It also addresses the topic of media transparency during conflicts; how people in power become gatekeepers of news, There are a lot of characters in this novel only a couple of which take precedence over the others: Sameera has firm opinions about what's right or wrong she enjoys music and has never really considered what her religious identity might mean on a larger scale: Jasmine Days brings out the jarring truth about revolts; how innocent people have to bear the brunt of the actions of a few, Highly recommend reading it!! What do you get out of it? A moving story about individuals caught in an uprising not knowing if they are safe within their own homes. 25 out of 5 stars Thank you Juggernaut for sending me a copy of this book in exchange of an honest review. Paperback Jasmine Days by Benyamin is a translated work of fiction: The plot covers her initial struggles in a country new to her both in her personal life (friends and extended family) as well as the professional life as a radio jockey, This book came under my radar after it won the inaugural JCB Prize for Literature in 2018: I cannot really point to a specific area in the book but it fell flat somewhere in between. Paperback When the ripples of the Tunisian Arab Spring reached the shores of Bahrain in 2011 the island kingdom experienced a level of civil unrest not seen there for decades. This novel (the inaugural winner of the JCB Prize for Literature) captures the dramatic tension and complexity of that turmoil well, While the protagonist Sameera initially comes across as very YA - something I did not find appealing - I gradually came to realize that this was intentional. It gives her character an arch necessary to propel the novel's action and hold the reader's attention. She moves from a girl who has been culturally isolated socially inexperienced and politically naïve to a young woman who learns and grows through traumas of various stripes, Along the way she gains a much deeper understanding of herself and the world around her: The reader is forced to consider such transformational decisions as well. Perhaps not surprisingly there are a few pull-quotes that speak to today's very different but equally disturbing international crises: No one knew what was going on any more, People talked and talked one had no idea what part of it was true what was exaggeration what was fiction. We believed what we wanted to believe and dismissed as falsehoods what we didn't like to hear: When doctors and nurses at the medical college of a country start talking about your people and our people there is nothing more to say. All in all a surprisingly good read and something I am glad to have finally made time for. It elevates the JCB Prize and will send me in search of other titles from that competition. He is residing in the Kingdom of Bahrain since 1992 from the age of twenty and his works appear regularly on Malayalam publications in Kerala. I gave the novel three stars for that sharp observation. You would think I gave my fourth star because of this. But honestly I gave my two stars to Baba. And for the loving man he was. And for being strong enough to cry. Man oh man. This was one beautiful read. Paperback A bit less than four stars. Still a good book though. Paperback 4. Detailed review soon. And the cover a bit underwhelming. Paperback 4. It's a very relevant book in today's times. Read on to know my thoughts about it. Ali Fardan and his fanaticism is written unabashedly. I love the book was unbiased in its tone. There are no chapters only subheadings within broad sections. I CANNOT STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS BOOK ENOUGH. Ratings - 4. It was originally written in Malayalam. The narrator is a minority Muslim immigrant woman from Pakistan. However I didn't really enjoy the book as a whole. Nevertheless I read it completely. Also few of the characters felt underdeveloped to me. Verdict: One time read..