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South Haven

Hirsh Sawhney



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South Haven

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South Haven Hirsh Sawhney "[T]his luminous debut...captures precisely the heartache of growing up." --*Library Journal*, Top Spring Indie Fiction

"A powerful story...a universal look at the complexity of how people wrestle with guilt and blame amid tragic loss."

--New Haven Independent

"[A] sensitive, poignant, resonating novel." --Bookslut

Included in John Reed's list of Most Anticipated Small Press Books of 2016 at Big Other

"A son of Hindu immigrants from India grows up in a New England suburb, where he struggles to find his way after his mother dies, while his father becomes immersed in anti-Muslim fundamentalism." --World Wide Work

"*South Haven* is an affecting tale of a family's loss, a child's grief, and the search for solace in all the wrong places. Hirsh Sawhney is an incandescent voice in fiction." --Laila Lalami, author of *The Moor's Account*

"It's no secret that grief makes us vulnerable, but Hirsh Sawhney's perceptively rendered *South Haven* presents a volatile mix of second-generation migration, sadness, and cruelty in suburban America. *South Haven* is bold, accessible, funny, and heartbreaking." --Jayne Anne Phillips, author of *Quiet Dell*

"Hirsh Sawhney writes with wit and tenderness about a harsh childhood. And such is his power of insight that this novel, set in a New England suburb, manages to illuminate a larger landscape of cruelty and torment."

--Pankaj Mishra, author of From the Ruins of Empire

"Hirsh Sawhney has produced an intelligent and beautiful novel. It is about America and India, fathers and children, families and loss. The world is changing and here is a new map of belonging." --Nadeem Aslam, author of *The Blind Man's Garden*

"A lyrical yet disturbing look at the grim realities of migration and American suburban life, *South Haven* manages to be both witty and unnerving at the same time. It is a novel that resonates long in the memory."

--Caryl Phillips, author of The Lost Child

Siddharth Arora lives an ordinary life in the New England suburb of South Haven, but his childhood comes to a grinding halt when his mother dies in a car accident. Siddharth soon gravitates toward a group of adolescent bullies, drinking and smoking instead of drawing and swimming. He takes great pains to care for his depressive father, Mohan Lal, an immigrant who finds solace in the hateful Hindu fundamentalism of his

homeland and cheers on Indian fanatics who murder innocent Muslims. When a new woman enters their lives, Siddharth and his father have a chance at a fresh start. They form a new family, hoping to leave their pain behind them.

South Haven is no simple coming-of-age tale or hero's journey, blurring the line between victim and victimizer and asking readers to contend with the lies we tell ourselves as we grieve and survive. Following in the tradition of narratives by Edwidge Danticat and Junot Díaz, Sawhney draws upon the measured lyricism of postcolonial writers like Michael Ondaatje but brings to his subjects distinctly American irreverence and humor.

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Joni Harris:

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James Sweeney:

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