island of a thousand mirrors nayomi munaweera

Island of a Thousand Mirrors - A Novel

Before violence tore apart the tapestry of Sri Lanka and turned its pristine beaches red, there
were two families. Yasodhara tells the story of her own Sinhala family, rich in love, with
everything they could ask for. As a child in idyllic Colombo, Yasodhara's and her siblings' lives
are shaped by social hierarchies, their parents' ambitions, teenage love and, subtly, the
differences between Tamil and Sinhala people; but the peace is shattered by the tragedies of
war. Yasodhara's family escapes to Los Angeles. But Yasodhara's life has already become
intertwined with a young Tamil girl's... Saraswathie is living in the active war zone of Sri Lanka,
and hopes to become a teacher. But her dreams for the future are abruptly stamped out when
she is arrested by a group of Sinhala soldiers and pulled into the very heart of the conflict that
she has tried so hard to avoid -- a conflict that, eventually, will connect her and Yasodhara in
unexpected ways. Nayomi Munaweera's Island of a Thousand Mirrors is an emotionally
resonant saga of cultural heritage, heartbreaking conflict and deep family bonds. Narrated in
two unforgettably authentic voices and spanning the entirety of the decades-long civil war, it
offers an unparalleled portrait of a beautiful land during its most difficult moment by a
spellbinding new literary talent who promises tremendous things to come.

Island of a Thousand Mirrors

"Straddling opposite side of the long and brutal civil war in Sri Lanka, two girls - one Sinhala, the
other Tamil - navigate their histories, sibling rivalries and adolescent heartbreaks, the burdens
of exile and belonging, and the harsh demands of survival. Written in stirring prose that evokes
the beauty of the island country and the bloodshed that has destroyed it, Nayomi Munaweera's
debut novel is a haunting tale of lives distorted by terrible violence." -- Cover.

The Island of a Thousand Mirrors

Before civil war tears the tapestry of Sri Lanka apart, the lives of two young women from two
very different families are fatefully linked by one chance encounter. In Colombo, Yasodhara
lives a full life with her Sinhala family, rich in love and everything she could ask for, though
shaped subtly by social hierarchies, her parents' ambitions, and the differences between the
Tamil and Sinhala people. All is well until the family's serene existence is shattered by the
outbreak of violence. Saraswathi, a Tamil, is living in the active war zone and dreams of
becoming a teacher. But her hopes for the future are trampled when she is arrested by a group
of Sinhala soldiers and pulled into the heart of a conflict she has tried desperately to avoid. A
powerful saga that strikes mercilessly at the heart of war, Island of a Thousand Mirrors marks
the arrival of a spellbinding new literary talent. 'By turns tender, beautiful, and devastating,
Island of A Thousand Mirrors is a deeply resonant tale of an unraveling Sri Lanka. Incredibly
moving, complex, and with prose you may want to eat, this debut is a triumph.' NoViolet
Bulawayo, award-winning author of We Need New Names
What Lies Between Us - A Novel

In the idyllic hill country of Sri Lanka, a young girl grows up with her loving family; but even in the midst of this paradise, terror lurks in the shadows. When tragedy strikes, she and her mother must seek safety by immigrating to America. There the girl reinvents herself as an American teenager to survive, with the help of her cousin; but even as she assimilates and thrives, the secrets and scars of her past follow her into adulthood. In this new country of freedom, everything she has built begins to crumble around her, and her hold on reality becomes more and more tenuous. When the past and the present collide, she sees only one terrible choice. From Nayomi Munaweera, the award-winning author of Island of a Thousand Mirrors, comes the confession of a woman, driven by the demons of her past to commit a single and possibly unforgivable crime. Praise for Island of a Thousand Mirrors: "The paradisiacal landscapes of Sri Lanka are as astonishing as the barbarity of its revolution, and Munaweera evokes the power of both in a lyrical debut novel worthy of shelving alongside her countryman Michael Ondaatje or her fellow writer of the multigenerational immigrant experience Jhumpa Lahiri." - Publishers Weekly "The beating heart of Island of a Thousand Mirrors is not so much its human characters but Sri Lanka itself and the vivid, occasionally incandescent, language used to describe this teardrop in the Indian Ocean." - The New York Times Book Review

Love Marriage - A Novel

In this globe-scattered Sri Lankan family, we speak of only two kinds of marriage. The first is the Arranged Marriage. The second is the Love Marriage. In reality, there is a whole spectrum in between, but most of us spend years running away from the first toward the second. [p. 3] The daughter of Sri Lankan immigrants who left their collapsing country and married in America, Yalini finds herself caught between the traditions of her ancestors and the lure of her own modern world. But when she is summoned to Toronto to help care for her dying uncle, Kumaran, a former member of the militant Tamil Tigers, Yalini is forced to see that violence is not a relic of the Sri Lankan past, but very much a part of her Western present. While Kumaran’s loved ones gather around him to say goodbye, Yalini traces her family’s roots—and the conflicts facing them as ethnic Tamils—through a series of marriages. Now, as Kumaran’s death and his daughter’s politically motivated nuptials edge closer, Yalini must decide where she stands. Lyrical and innovative, V. V. Ganeshananthan’s novel brilliantly unfolds how generations of struggle both form and fractures families. Praise for Love Marriage “A beautiful first novel. This intricately woven tale, with its universal themes of love and estrangement, presents an exciting new voice in American literature.” –Yiyun Li, author of A Thousand Years of Good Prayers “Complex and moving... an impressive debut.” –Daniel Alarcón, author of Lost City Radio “V. V. Ganeshananthan has given us a riveting picture of the intersections of love and war that shape us all. A debut of incredible passion and wisdom.” –Rebecca Johns, author of Icebergs “At its best and simplest, Ganeshananthan can be profoundly moving. She captures the pain of exile poignantly.” --The San Francisco Chronicle “Ganeshananthan has created a slow-burning and beautifully written debut in Love Marriage. It is an evocative examination of Sri Lankan cultural mores, and the way one family is affected by love and war” —The Financial Times “Poignant and authentic.... Insight gained into Toronto’s Tamil community is a welcome bonus in this gem of a book by a young writer who is sure to present more thought-
provoking, entertaining prose in the future." — The Toronto Star “The book is at times witty and always beautifully written” — The Irish Times "Innovative….this is an ambitious family drama about an underreported part of the world, filled with well-shaded characters [and] gorgeous flourish…Buy it." -- New York Magazine "As if she were stringing a necklace of bright beads, the author relates the stories of Yalini's Sri Lankan forebears in lapidary folkloric narratives…What she does here, she does quite affectingly." -- The Boston Globe "In spare, lyrical prose, V.V. Ganeshananthan's debut novel tells the story of two Sri Lankan Tamil families over four generations who, despite civil war and displacement, are irrevocably joined by marriage and tradition….Powerful." -- Ms. Magazine

This Divided Island - Life, Death, and the Sri Lankan War

Samanth Subramanian has written about politics, culture, and history for the New York Times and the New Yorker. Now, Subramanian takes on a complex topic that touched millions of lives in This Divided Island. In the summer of 2009, the leader of the dreaded Tamil Tiger guerrillas was killed, bringing to an end the civil war in Sri Lanka. For nearly thirty years, the war's fingers had reached everywhere, leaving few places, and fewer people, untouched. What happens to the texture of life in a country that endures such bitter conflict? What happens to the country’s soul? Subramanian gives us an extraordinary account of the Sri Lankan war and the lives it changed. Taking us to the ghosts of summers past, he tells the story of Sri Lanka today. Through travels and conversations, he examines how people reconcile themselves to violence, how the powerful become cruel, and how victory can be put to the task of reshaping memory and burying histories.

On Sal Mal Lane

One of Reader's Digest Best Summer Reads (US). Set against the backdrop of the Sri Lankan civil war, Ru Freeman’s epic novel explores the lives of the diverse families that live on Sal Mal Lane and the heartbreaking ways this once harmonious community turns on one another with the country on the brink of war. On the day the Herath family moves in, Sal Mal Lane is a quiet street, disturbed only by the cries of the children whose triumphs and tragedies sustain the families that live there. As each neighbour adapts to the newcomers in different ways, the children fill their days with cricket matches, romantic crushes, and small rivalries. But when the tides of civil war begin to turn towards the neighbourhood, their differences ignite in ways no one could have imagined. As the stability of their neighborhood is threatened by clashing political beliefs and prejudices, the children of the community are forced to watch their parents and friends turn against one another. Seen through the children's eyes, the events on Sal Mal Lane come to mirror the course of modern Sri Lanka at its most violent and volatile. A powerful, evocative work, On Sal Mal Lane masterfully illuminates the origins of this war and explores the lengths family will go to protect one another.

The Seasons of Trouble - Life Amid the Ruins of Sri Lanka's Civil War

For three decades, Sri Lanka's civil war tore communities apart. In 2009, the Sri Lankan army finally defeated the separatist Tamil Tigers guerrillas in a fierce battle that swept up about
300,000 civilians and killed more than 40,000. More than a million had been displaced by the conflict, and the resilient among them still dared to hope. But the next five years changed everything. Rohini Mohan's searing account of three lives caught up in the devastation looks beyond the heroism of wartime survival to reveal the creeping violence of the everyday. When city-bred Sarva is dragged off the streets by state forces, his middle-aged mother, Indra, searches for him through the labyrinthine Sri Lankan bureaucracy. Meanwhile, Mugil, a former child soldier, deserts the Tigers in the thick of war to protect her family. Having survived, they struggle to live as the Sri Lankan state continues to attack minority Tamils and Muslims, frittering away the era of peace. Sarva flees the country, losing his way — and almost his life — in a bid for asylum. Mugil stays, breaking out of the refugee camp to rebuild her family and an ordinary life in the village she left as a girl. But in her tumultuous world, desires, plans, and people can be snatched away in a moment. The Seasons of Trouble is a startling, brutal, yet beautifully written debut from a prize-winning journalist. It is a classic piece of reportage, five years in the making, and a trenchant, compassionate examination of the corrosive effect of conflict on a people.

Still Counting the Dead - Survivor's of Sri Lanka's Hidden War

"An extraordinary book. This dignified, just and unbearable account of the dark heart of Sri Lanka needs to be read by everyone." — Roma Tearne, author of Mosquito The tropical island of Sri Lanka is a paradise for tourists, but in 2009 it became a hell for its Tamil minority, as decades of civil war between the Tamil Tiger guerrillas and the government reached its bloody climax. Caught in the crossfire were hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren, doctors, farmers, fishermen, nuns, and other civilians. And the government ensured through a strict media blackout that the world was unaware of their suffering. Now, a UN enquiry has called for war crimes investigation, and Frances Harrison, a BBC correspondent for Sri Lanka during the conflict, recounts those crimes for the first time in sobering, shattering detail.

Balance of Fragile Things - A Novel

"...absorbing...a delightful intrigue, with strong characters who develop and grow throughout the book as they face frightening turns." —Publishers Weekly"...eloquent prose and original, vivid details..." —The Los Angeles Review"A luminous and sophisticated novel, Balance of Fragile Things offers a compelling view into modern family life with all its complications, secrets, and unbreakable bonds." —Debra Ginsberg, author of The Grift and What the Heart Remembers"Here is a new voice in American literature worth celebrating." —Greg Ames, author of Buffalo Lockjaw A multicultural American family comes together just as the world around them begins to fall apart... When Vic Singh finds a dead blue butterfly—out of place in his cold, upstate New York village—he knows something is terribly amiss. Yet he is too busy dodging the bully at his high school, let alone trying to live up to his father’s expectations, to look much further into the environmental oddities around him. Meanwhile, for Vic’s father, Paul, the ghosts of the past cause him to pressure his son to live up to his Sikh traditions—while his Latvian wife, Maija, is haunted by the present: She’s having new and ominous psychic visions even though she can’t read her own teenage children. Isabella, attempting to lose herself through her role in a school play, has an illness she can’t seem to shake—and Vic, trying to find himself, is spending
more time alone in nature. Then Paul's father and Maija's mother move in to the family home, upending the delicate balance of this Indian/Latvian family and its two American teenagers. Yet, as the environmental devastation that Vic's butterflies have forewarned comes to bear, the family comes together in new and unexpected ways. Olivia Chadha’s lovely, multilayered novel brings us into an extended family of three generations that strives to remain together in an unstable world.