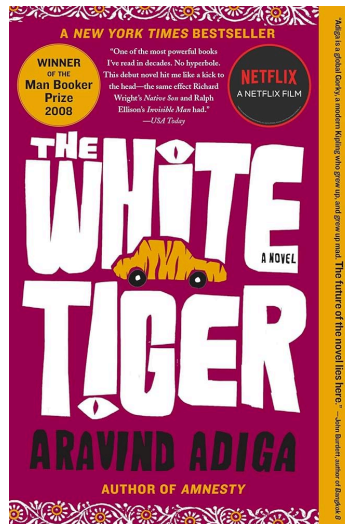


Thoughts on *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga

2.16.26 - From my bed



Ok we are back ladies and gentleman. And shoutout all my ladies with gentle hands (or whatever Drake said). I wrapped up this book about a week ago and it was a really quick and interesting /engaging read. I liked the format of Balram writing to the Chinese politician as then in turn it felt like he was speaking/writing directly to me and it was more casual and personal writing then formal. Threw me into his life and story way more than if Adiga just wrote Balram's story in a traditional book sense. Balram's character is really able to bleed into the letters and it gives you access / shows you his character in a much more authentic way I think which I really appreciated.

Now into more of the content of the book, one of the first feelings I had while / after reading was how fortunate and blessed I am to have the life I have. The picture Adiga paints (he mentions in the afterword that Balram himself is a fictitious character but very much based upon a collection of real people he has known) of growing up in India in extreme poverty was jarring and eye-opening. One thing that stuck with me/moved me the most was the fact Balram didn't even get named until he was like 7-8. He was just called "Munna" meaning "boy" by everybody he knew. He didn't even think twice about this either. This stuck with me and I feel like this detail in the story drove home the point that those in poverty in India are not viewed as human beings / individual entities but rather just a bunch of animals / things to be used and manipulated to the elites objectives. Hand in hand with the nameless aspect was how these poor towns in India were consistently used in the political voting process. They are used as political votes/leverage with all of them being registered as voting for whichever corrupt party can pay to have the town "vote" that way. Balram had a line where he said something like "I am India's most active voter but have never seen the inside of a voting booth." The political party in power just comes in registers the town as voting one way and no one in the town has the education (more on that in a sec), political leverage, or money to do anything about it. It's because of how

the elite/wealthy keep the poor uneducated and stuck in the loop of poverty (or as Balram calls it, the Chicken Coupe) that these abusive and manipulative systems are able to persist.

Honestly I have such a great respect for Adiga for how he was able to construct a fictional story that is such a beautiful (in how well he puts it together) and dark commentary and snapshot of class corruption in India but also how the world works everywhere, on scales large and small. To be able to fit so much content / reality of the structure of the world we live in was really powerful to read.

To be honest I don't have a ton more to say about the book other than kinda restating what it says itself but I would really highly recommend this to book to any and all as I think its message is timeless and spotlights the biggest issues in our world today of class inequality. Not educated enough to write as much as I'd like to but this book opened my brain up and made me think and look at the world a different way which I think all good books do.