



The Thing about Thugs

Tabish Khair

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A subversive, macabre novel of a young Indian man's misadventures in Victorian London as the city is racked by a series of murders

In a small Bihari village, Captain William T. Meadows finds just the man to further his phrenological research back home: Amir Ali, confessed member of the infamous Thugee cult. With tales of a murderous youth redeemed, Ali gains passage to England, his villainously shaped skull there to be studied. Only Ali knows just how embroidered his story is, so when a killer begins depriving London's underclass of their heads, suspicion naturally falls on the "thug." With help from fellow immigrants led by a shrewd Punjabi woman, Ali journeys deep into a hostile city in an attempt to save himself and end the gruesome murders.

Ranging from skull-lined mansions to underground tunnels a ghostly people call home, *The Thing about Thugs* is a feat of imagination to rival Wilkie Collins or Michael Chabon. Short-listed for the 2010 Man Asian Literary Prize, this sly Victorian role reversal marks the arrival of a compelling new Indian novelist to North America.

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