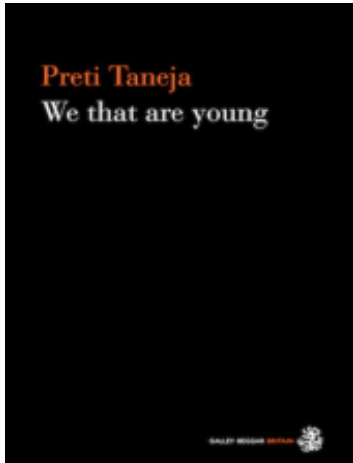


We That Are Young by Preti Taneja

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Family Fortunes

The sudden resignation of a tyrannical CEO threatens to tear a carefully constructed world apart. Born to a Maharaja and his 15-year-old wife, Devraj Bapuji has invested in industries as diverse as hotels, textile mills and transport to build his extensive Company. In the right place at the right time, he has profited from the new capitalism of contemporary India but his attempt to divide his legacy between his family unexpectedly precipitates the rapid unravelling of all their lives.



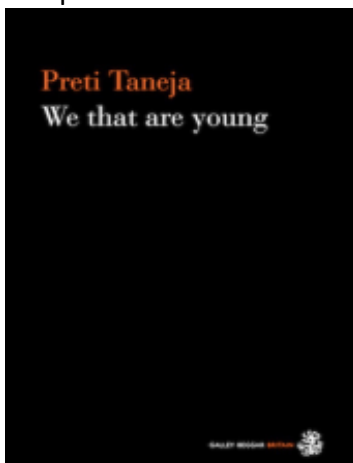
'Set your watch. India time.'

The action moves seamlessly between New Delhi and Kashmir. Devraj has three daughters and no sons, a fact he laments despite acting like a doting father. His youngest, Sita, has run away, leaving her married elder sisters, Radha and Gargi, to pick up the pieces.

Gargi steps forward as Acting Chairman of the Company, trying to introduce positive employment practices, particularly for women. She plans to move the Company forward but faces deeply ingrained misogyny. Conservative traditions override even familial love as women are both idolised for purity and considered possessions for men to play with.

'Our Indian women are a special breed in the world. Like beautiful phools they bloom best in beds, when they are well tended... just tell her what you want, she will never say "No."'

Meanwhile, close family friend Jivan Singh returns home after fifteen years in America. The illegitimate son of a wealthy married man and a beautiful dancer, as a child he lived at his Dad's stately home before being banished. He discovers a transformed New Delhi thriving at the forefront of India's new status as a world competitor. Jivan is tormented by unresolved childhood issues and feels intimidated by the ostentatious



'VVIP' lifestyle of his former playmates. He attempts to acclimatise but unspoken rules conspire against him and there is a sad sense that he will always be an outsider, even in the country of his birth.

'Here, of course, they will see his American smile, his suit and tie, first class, pure gold. The truth is, he is Jivan Singh... He was born on this Indian earth, he waited all this time to return.'

This epic family saga explores complex universal themes of heritage, social class, and the fragile nature of identity. The story is told from the perspectives of five key characters across generations, providing a deeper insight into unfolding events. It is disturbing how quickly the ties that bind are broken and the reader's loyalties are severely tested. When things unravel, sympathetic characters turn very nasty indeed.

Profiles are raised and images managed, disguising what is rotten beneath. The family home is called a farm for legal purposes but no farming is done there and the flowers look real but have no scent. The murderous Devraj is described by the media as an 'animal lover and environmentalist' despite owning a pet tiger and beating a servant half to death.

We That Are Young is a sumptuous feast of language and culture, written in English interspersed with untranslated Hindi. Every sentence is meticulously crafted, instilling the exquisite prose with meaning and ensuring that no page is wasted in this huge feat of a book.

About the publisher

Galley Beggar Press is committed to producing beautiful books. Nurturing unique and innovative writers and publishing works of the highest quality and integrity, they also believe in the 'fantastic potential of ebooks to reach new audiences, to spread our writers' precious words around the world and to revive and revitalise books that would otherwise either be out of print or lost on the backlist.'

About the reviewer

Becky Danks is a creative writer, book reviewer and dog lover. She recently won City University's City Writes competition for her short story The Anniversary. She is a judge of flash fiction for the Hysteria Writing Competition. Follow her on Twitter: @BeckyD123. Website: www.beckydanks.com