



Naked Voices: Stories & Sketches

By Saadat Hasan Manto

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In this collection of sixteen stories and three sketches, translated by Rakhshanda Jalil, Manto brazenly celebrates the warts of a seemingly decent society as well as its dark underbelly - tired and overworked prostitutes in 'The Candle's Tears' or 'Loser all the Way'; ruthless as also humane pimps in 'The Hundred Candle Watt Bulb' and 'Sahay'; the utter helplessness of men in the face of a sexual encounter in 'Naked Voices' and 'Coward'; and the madness perpetrated by the Partition as witnessed in 'By God!' and 'Yazid'. In one of the three sketches, which form part of this collection, the author brilliantly reveals himself to the world in a schizophrenic piece titled 'Saadat Hasan' calling 'Manto the writer' a liar, a thief and a failure! And in another titled 'In a Letter to Uncle Sam', Manto superbly couches his anti-imperialistic views in an innocent letter from a poor nephew to a capitalist and prosperous uncle in America.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

SAADAT HASAN MANTO (1912-55) is one of the finest Urdu short story writers. Provocative, outrageous, scandalous, sometimes even blasphemous, Manto was the original enfant terrible of Urdu literature. Cocking a snook at society, literary norms and most notions of propriety, Manto touched the hearts of many with his convincing and utterly original portrayal of human fallibility. RAKHSHANDA JALIL has edited two collections of short stories: an anthology called Urdu Stories and a selection by Pakistani women called Neither Night Nor Day. She has published five works of translations: Premchand's short stories entitled The Temple and the Mosque; a collection of satirical writing in Hindi by Asghar Wajahat entitled Lies: Half Told; thirty-two satirical cameos by Saadat Hasan Manto entitled Black Borders; nazms by Urdu poet Shahryar called Through the Closed Doorway; short stories by Intizar Husain entitled Circle and Other Stories; and a collection of Premchand's short stories for children called A Winter's Tale and Other Stories. Her translations have appeared in a number of journals and magazines, she has also coauthored, with Mushirul Hasan, Partners in Freedom: Jamia Millia Islamia and written Invisible City, a collection of essays on the little-known monuments of Delhi. She contributes regularly on issues of faith and community to major English newspapers and journals; co-edits Third Frame, a journal devoted to literature, culture and society; and, works as Media & Cultural Coordinator at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Earlier, she has taught English at the universities of Delhi and Aligarh.

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