

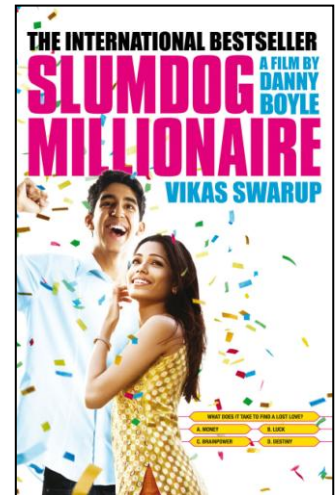
# Book Reviews

Reviewed by Patricia Weller

## Slumdog Millionaire by Vikas Swarup

A remarkable tale of a young Indian boy, Ram Mohammed Thomas, who is able to successfully answer every question in a "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" style TV quiz show. In the process of the show's management trying to discredit the win, we learn of an almost unbelievable life story that proves how someone so poor without formal education could come to acquire such knowledge.

As the book follows each quiz question, Ram Mohammed Thomas recounts the story that led him to know the correct answer. In retelling his experiences, we are exposed to the struggles of India's poor in finding food, shelter, work, and maybe even some pleasure in their daily lives.



## A Fine Balance by Rohinton Mistry

An almost unbelievable story that intertwines the lives of a handful of characters and tells how circumstance and fate bring these characters together. It is a tale of conflict between dependence and independence, poverty and survival, power and submission, all within the backdrop of India's complicated history and societal structure.

We see how the lives of the main characters are shaped and battered by the caste system, by India's dense population, by political unrest and corruption, by religious clashes and struggles within the characters' own families. One of the characters describes life as a fine balance between hope and despair. All of the characters walk a fine line where circumstances can lead to either outcome.

The book is both interesting and brutal. If you are curious about life in another culture, it is well worth the read.

## The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time by Mark Haddon

This is a unique story told from the point of view of a young autistic boy, Christopher John Francis Boone, who finds his neighbour's dog has been killed. In trying to discover who may have committed the crime, we follow Christopher on an adventure that leads him to the perpetrator of the crime, but in so doing, takes him far beyond his familiar space.

The author, who has worked with autistic children, brings to life how an autistic child may function day to day and interact with family, friends, and strangers. It is a fun read and interesting in its unique narrative.

