



## The City of Devi: A Novel

By Manil Suri

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### The City of Devi: A Novel By Manil Suri

**From the author of *The Death of Vishnu*, "a big, pyrotechnic...ambitious...ingenious" (*Wall Street Journal*) novel.**

Mumbai has emptied under the threat of imminent nuclear annihilation; gangs of marauding Hindu and Muslim thugs rove the desolate streets; yet Sarita can think of only one thing: buying the last pomegranate that remains in perhaps the entire city. She is convinced that the fruit holds the key to reuniting her with her physicist husband, Karun, who has been mysteriously missing for more than a fortnight.

Searching for his own lover in the midst of this turmoil is Jaz?cocky, handsome, and glib. "The Jazter," as he calls himself, is Muslim, but his true religion has steadfastly been sex with men. Dodging danger at every step, both he and Sarita are inexorably drawn to Devi ma, the patron goddess who has reputedly appeared in person to save her city. What they find will alter their lives more fundamentally than any apocalypse to come.

A wickedly comedic and fearlessly provocative portrayal of individuals balancing on the sharp edge of fate, *The City of Devi* brilliantly upends assumptions of politics, religion, and sex, and offers a terrifying yet exuberant glimpse of the end of the world.

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### Editorial Review

#### From Booklist

During their awkward courtship, physicist Karun tells statistician Sarita about an alternative vision of the Hindu triumvirate in which Brahman is replaced with the mother goddess Devi. This trinity just so happens to match the novels in Suri's now completed trilogy: *The Death of Vishnu* (2001), *The Age of Shiva* (2008), and *The City of Devi*. So frenetic, concussive, and flagrantly explicit is this on-target, apocalyptic urban satire, Suri can stand as the Tom Wolfe of Mumbai. First the city is bewitched by a futuristic Bollywood extravaganza, *Superdevi*. Then war breaks out between Pakistan and India, the nuclear threat escalates, Hindu and Muslim vigilantes menace the populace, and Devi herself appears at a beach resort, drawing a frenzied crowd. Yet Sarita is determined to cross the perilous city-in-ruins to search for her husband. Jaz—gay, Muslim, self-mocking, impish, and resolute—is also on a risk-all quest of the heart. By daringly yoking erotic longing with terrorism in a trinitarian tale of amped-up mythology and end-of-world chaos, Suri forges an incendiary love story and provocative improvisation on India's monumental epics. --Donna Seaman

#### Review

*The City of Devi* combines, in a magician's feat, the thrill of Bollywood with the pull of a thriller. Set in a city at the brink of the end, this is a fiercely imagined story of three souls haunted by a love that will change their most elemental ideas of identity. Manil Suri's bravest and most passionate book. --Kiran Desai

The best sex comedy of the year about nuclear war between India and Pakistan...Even amid the wondrous variety of contemporary Indian fiction, Suri's work stands apart, mingling comedy and death, eroticism and politics, godhood and Bollywood like no one else. --Ron Charles

Wild, kaleidoscopic . . . dazzling.

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Even amid the wondrous variety of contemporary Indian fiction, Suri's work stands apart, mingling comedy and death, eroticism and politics, godhood and Bollywood like no one else. --Ron Charles"

With comedic flashes and a plot that pulses forward, Suri's tale solidifies the reputation that he earned as a master storyteller with *The Death of Vishnu* and *The Age of Shiva*. "

A stirringly poignant love story, drawn with deep compassion. "

Wild, kaleidoscopic . . . dazzling."

*The City of Devi* is so exuberant and sexy, one may wish to purchase a prophylactic alongside it. When the world comes to an end, I will spend my last days in Mumbai clutching a copy of Manil Suri's dazzling epic. - -Gary Shteyngart, author of *Super Sad True Love Story* and *Absurdistan*"

#### About the Author

Manil Suri is the best-selling author of *The Death of Vishnu*, a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award, and *The*

Age of Shiva. A native of Mumbai, he is a professor of mathematics at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

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