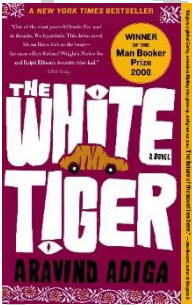




Fr. Michael Goetz Library Learning Commons Teacher's Book Review



White tiger, Aravind Adiga Reviewed by Ms. Mouchbahani.

The *White Tiger*, by Aravind Adiga, thickly layered with irony and understatement, accomplishes a sophisticated blend of polarities: it is witty and crude, humorous and dark, parodiabale and satirical, all the while narrated by a charming and complex protagonist who teeter totters from trustworthy servant to wicked traitor and pathetic victim to cold-blooded murderer. Riddled with ridiculous honesty and daring truths, the author's message and delivery are highly evocative, and our reactions constantly varied. The reader feels pity, humour, shock, disgust and embarrassment while Adiga exposes the injustices of Indian society, especially the divide between rich and poor, and the corruption it breeds. In an interview Adiga claimed he wanted to write in the voice of someone completely different from himself. This is evident. A Colombia and oxford graduate, with a serious and polite disposition, he relays his story through the lens of a poor and primitive villager stuck in the "rooster coop" – the dog-eat-dog world of the underclass – who swears and secretly ridicules everyone around him, including his own family. With Chekovian lines like "she was getting fat on schedule", and pathetic characters recollective of Fitzgerald's Daisy and Myrtle, the reader is both humoured and disturbed. A perfect black comedy that uses farce to make light of the morbid carelessness of the upper class and the hostility and desperation it begets in its victims, *The White Tiger*, should not be missed, and is superbly rich choice for classroom teaching!