

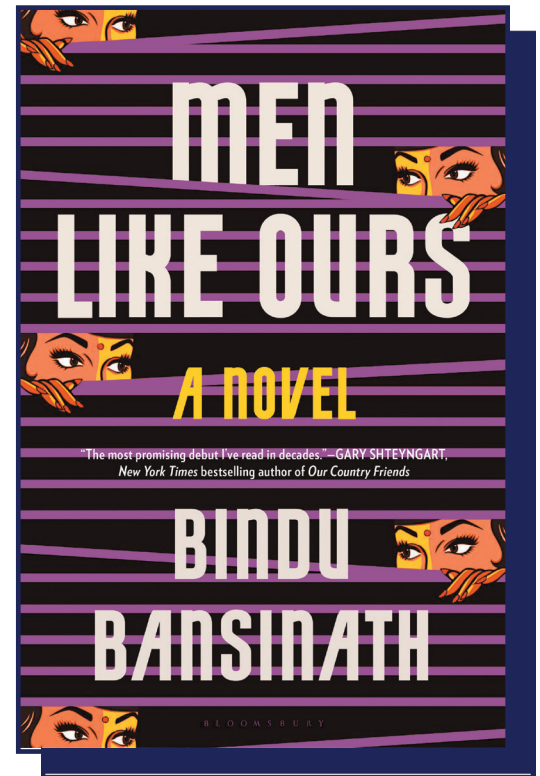


*Men Like Ours* by Bindu Bansinath

## Questions for Discussion

*Please note: Some of these questions contain spoilers.*

1. Why did Anita's mother and uncle arrange her marriage to Ashok? How does the novel present arranged marriages versus love marriages in their community? In what ways did this depiction reaffirm or challenge your ideas about arranged marriages?
2. There are several dogs throughout the novel, from the neighbor's Pomeranian, to those at the animal shelter visit with Anita and Leila, to the closing scene where mother and daughter return Baloo the Doberman to Hema's house. Do the dogs represent something more than just the pets they are? Why did the author choose to include the return of Baloo in the final scene of the novel?
3. When Ashok dies of a heart attack, Anita is inconsolable in her grief. Why did the loss hit her so hard after all the times she wished him gone? Do you feel that, in the end, she cared for her husband? Why or why not?
4. It's suggested that Matthew may have been inappropriate with Riya like he was with Leila. How did this affect Riya and Leila's relationship? Why do you think the author chose to leave Matthew and Riya's relationship ambiguous?
5. When did you begin to understand Matthew's intentions toward Leila as predatory? When did Leila, and why was it difficult for her to tell someone about Matthew's behavior?
6. Anita didn't know what was going on between her daughter and Matthew until Leila told her. Why do you think Anita didn't notice or chose to ignore any signs of inappropriate behavior? What did Matthew's presence offer Anita, Leila, and their family that may have made this reckoning more difficult?
7. Do you think the other women of the community knew about Matthew's inappropriate behavior toward Leila? Was Leila's community complicit? What do you think neighbors owe each other?



8. Do you believe a part of Leila blames her mother for what happened to her? At the end, did they reconcile by removing the threat together?
9. What do Leila's final words—"Better to bury and move on"—mean to you? Do you agree? Why or why not?
10. Who are the "men like ours" referenced in the title? How do the women enable these men? How do they hold them accountable? Does the prologue read differently when read at the beginning of the book and reread at the end?