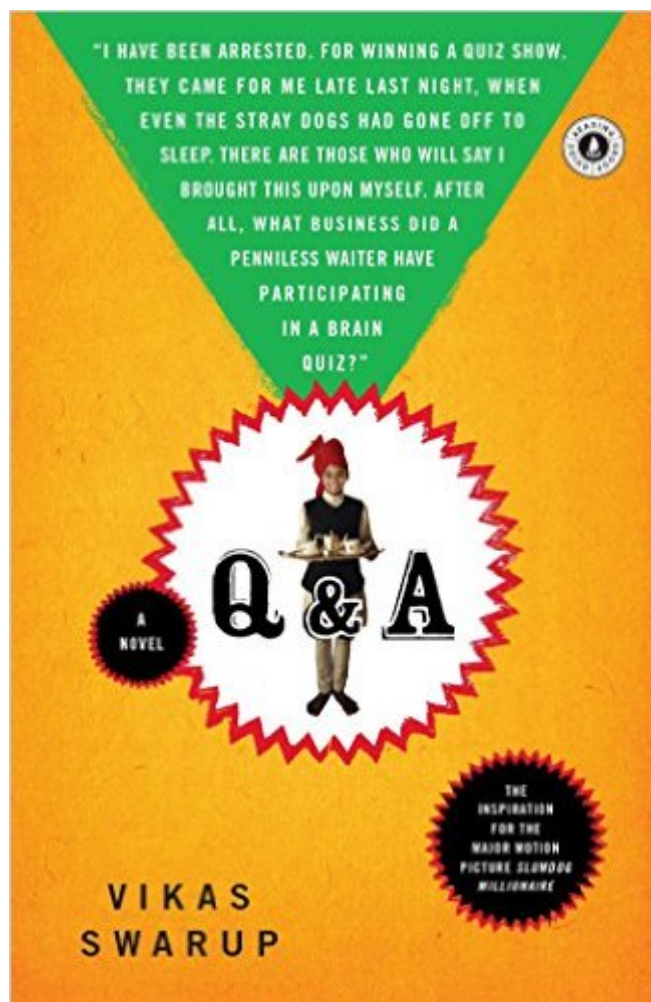


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Q & A: A Novel



Synopsis

Vikas Swarup's spectacular debut, which provided the inspiration for the award-winning film *Slumdog Millionaire*, is a page-turning and beguiling story of love, perseverance, and drama. Vikas Swarup's remarkable debut novel opens in a jail cell in Mumbai, India, where Ram Mohammad Thomas is being held after correctly answering all twelve questions on India's biggest quiz show, *Who Will Win a Billion?* It is hard to believe that a poor orphan who has never read a newspaper or gone to school could win such a contest. But through a series of exhilarating tales Ram explains to his lawyer how episodes in his life gave him the answer to each question. Ram takes us on an amazing review of his own history "from the day he was found as a baby in the clothes donation box of a Delhi church to his employment by a faded Bollywood star to his adventure with a security-crazed Australian army colonel to his career as an overly creative tour guide at the Taj Mahal. Swarup's Q & A is a charming blend of high comedy, drama, and romance that reveals how we know what we know "not just about trivia, but about life itself. Cutting across humanity in all its squalor and glory, Vikas Swarup presents a kaleidoscopic vision of the struggle between good and evil "and what happens when one boy has no other choice in life but to survive.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I want to start this by saying that I like tragic stories. I love drama and heartbreak and emotional connections through horrible situations. I can't deny it, but it sucks me in and holds me close. That being said, there comes a point where your incessant badgering of tragedy upon tragedy becomes manipulative and unsuccessful. I faced that problem while reading Vikas Swarup's 'Q & A', the

inspiration for Danny Boyle's Oscar winning 'Slumdog Millionaire'. This is one of those rare occasions where the movie is better than the novel. That isn't saying a whole lot, since the film was mediocre at best, but it is saying something. First of all, to anyone who wants to read this book because they loved the movie, beware. This book is VERY different. The same core plot is there. A young boy has won India's 'Who Wants to Win a Billion' and has been arrested on charges of cheating. Now he has to explain how a poor waiter could have possibly known all the answers to the questions and he takes us on his journey through life. That is where the similarities stop. Many (most) of the stories he tells are not in the film. The love story is not there (there is a small love story unveiled at the very end of the book, but not like the one in the film) and all the jovial lightheartedness of the film is missing in the book. Instead, we are faced with chapter after chapter of tragic surroundings that heap upon the reader with each passing sentence. Children are molested, people are murdered, women are abused, money is stolen, children are maimed for financial gain; life is hopeless. All of this could be forgiven had Vikas Swarup not been such a lazy writer.

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