

## The Sound of Language: A Novel

Amulya Malladi

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In this luminous story of bravery, tradition, and the power of language, an Afghan woman and Danish widower form an unexpected alliance.

Escaping the turmoil and heartbreak of war-torn Kabul, Raihana settles with distant relatives in the strange, cold, damp country of Denmark. Homesick and heartbroken, Raihana bravely attempts to start a new life, trying hard not to ponder the fate of her husband, who was taken prisoner by the Taliban and never heard from again.

Soon after arriving, Raihana finds herself in a language school, struggling to learn Danish, which she thinks sounds like the buzzing of bees. To improve her speaking skills, Raihana apprentices herself to Gunnar, a recent widower who is steadily withdrawing from the world around him, even neglecting the bee colonies he worked so hard to cultivate with his late wife. Over the course of the bee season, Raihana and Gunnar forge an unlikely relationship, despite the disapproval of their friends and relatives. But when the violence Raihana thought she had left behind in Afghanistan rears its head, she and Gunnar are forced to confront the ghosts of the past as they navigate the uncertain future.

Praise for Song of the Cuckoo Bird

- "Mesmerizing . . . a sprawling, gorgeous intergenerational saga."
- -Jacquelyn Mitchard.
- "An intelligent, absorbing novel."
- -The Boston Globe



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