

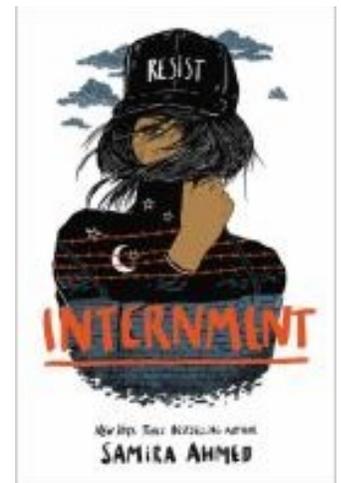


Internment

Samira Ahmed

Discussion Questions

1. Layla's father's poetry opens the novel, both with its presence in the epigraph and in its citation at the Amin's relocation. How do these two poems speak to the power of the written and spoken word throughout *Internment*?
2. How does Layla's reaction to her family's internment differ from her parents' reactions? Where do you think this divide stems from?
3. Layla remembers her nanni telling her that "Praying is important. But you can't simply pray for what you want. You have to act." How do Layla and other characters turn their faith into action?
4. How does life at Mobius attempt to mirror "normal" life? How do the internees attempt to hold onto normalcy and how is that different than the "normalcy" the Director tries to create?
5. Ayesha claims Jake used the phrase "Insha'Allah" as "a shibboleth... a word you can use to distinguish who's on your side and who isn't" (p.163). How do characters indicate their allegiances throughout the book? Are words or actions a stronger indicator of someone's true purpose?
6. How do the minders treat the other internees? What motivates the minders' actions?
7. Layla observes of Suraya: "This year must have been so much harder for her, someone so visibly Muslim. And black" (p.263). What role does the intersection between race and faith play in the treatment of the internees? How does this intersection, and other differences in experience and culture, factor into the privilege afforded different characters?
10. In her Author's Note, Samira Ahmed cites specific events from America's past and present that inform the plot of *Internment*. How specifically are these events reflected in the novel? What other historic or current examples of authoritarianism do you see echoes of in Layla's story?





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About the Author

Born in Bombay India and raised outside of Chicago, Illinois, Samira spent countless hours at the library in her small hometown nestled in an oversized armchair next to an old Victorian fireplace with her nose in an Agatha Christie novel or re-reading *Little Women*, hoping that Jo would somehow end up with Laurie *this* time. Samira always loved to write—especially poetry—but never actually dreamed of becoming a writer until she was an adult and an idea for a story captured her imagination and wouldn't let go.

She received her BA and MAT from the University of Chicago and went on to teach high school English in both the suburbs of Chicago and the New York City Public Schools. After she left the classroom, she worked in education non-profits, helping to create more than seventy small high schools in New York City and fought to secure billions of dollars in public school funding throughout New York State.

Samira is the New York Times bestselling author of *Love, Hate, & Other Filters*, *Internment* and *Mad, Bad, & Dangerous to Know* (April 2020).

These days, Samira lives in Chicago, Illinois. When she's not writing or reading, she can be found on her lifelong quest for the perfect pastry.

This book is available for download as an eBook and an eAudiobook. For more information, please visit lpl.overdrive.com or call 519-661-4600.

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