



Walking a Tightrope: New writing from Asian Britain

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[George Hunt](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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This book appears at a time when reports suggest that many members of British communities who trace their ancestry to the Indian subcontinent are rejecting the label of 'Asian' for being simplistically unspecific. It is interesting to find that the strongest unifying factors in this entertaining collection of ten short stories and extracts seem to me to be British rather than Asian. There are diverse perspectives and genres here, ranging from Debjani Chatterjee's tryingly unlikely tale of yeti-hunting to Aamer Hussein's all too believable account of the agonising complexities of first love within a cosmopolitan network. Farrukh Dhondy's sad but funny tale of a girl's attempts to save a stray dog from the neighbourhood vermin controller is the only one that is set entirely in the Indian subcontinent. The rest, apart from Adam Zameenzad's rather slight flight of surrealist fancy, have at least one foot in the UK, and deal with topics that will be recognisable to any of its young citizens. Racist gang warfare is treated with romantic over-optimism in Jamila Gavin's tale of a young 'Asian' drummer defying his brother by playing in a white band, but perhaps the most powerfully written story, Bali Rai's scarifying account of domestic violence within a Punjabi family, is a grim reminder of regrettable traits that cross cultural boundaries. This is a fascinatingly diverse collection which deserves to find a wide readership.

Running Order:

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