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A VISIT WITH MARINA BUDHOS

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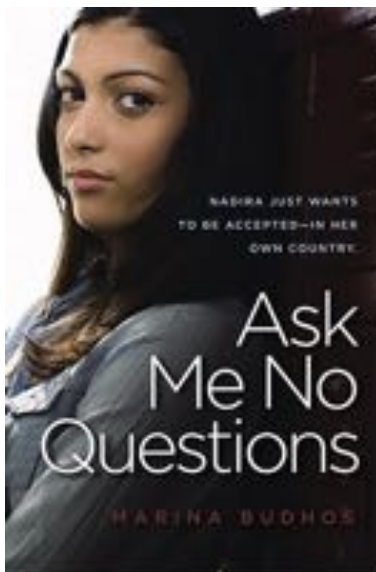
@sgwritersfest



Tell Us We're Home

Jaya, Maria, and Lola are just like the other eighth-grade girls in the wealthy suburb of Meadowbrook, New Jersey. They love spending time with their best friends after school, sharing frappés and complaining about the other kids. But there's one big difference: all three are daughters of maids and nannies. And they go to school with the very same kids whose families their mothers work for.

That difference grows even bigger—and more painful—when Jaya's mother is accused of theft and Jaya's small, fragile world collapses. When tensions about immigrants start to erupt, fracturing this perfect, serene suburb, all three girls are tested, as outsiders—and as friends. Each of them must learn to find a place for themselves in a town that barely notices they exist.



Watched

Naeem is far from the "model teen." Moving fast in his immigrant neighborhood in Queens is the only way he can outrun the eyes of his hardworking Bangladeshi parents and their gossipy neighbors. Even worse, they're not the only ones watching. Cameras on poles. Mosques infiltrated. Everyone knows: Be careful what you say and who you say it to. Anyone might be a watcher.

Naeem thinks he can charm his way through anything, until his mistakes catch up with him and the cops offer a dark deal. Naeem sees a way to be a hero—a protector—like the guys in his brother's comic books. Yet what is a hero? What is a traitor? And where does Naeem belong?

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Ask Me No Questions

Since emigrating from Bangladesh, fourteen-year-old Nadira and her family have been living in New York City on expired visas, hoping to realize their dream of becoming legal U.S. citizens. But after 9/11, everything changes. Suddenly being Muslim means you are dangerous -- a suspected terrorist.

When Nadira's father is arrested and detained at the U.S.-Canadian border, Nadira and her older sister, Aisha, are told to carry on as if everything is the same. The teachers at Flushing High don't ask any questions, but Aisha falls apart. Nothing matters to her anymore -- not even college. It's up to Nadira to be the strong one and bring her family back together again.

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