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A Girl Like That

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This story is as jarring as its beginning. The book opens at a car crash, showing the mangled bodies of Zarin, the reckless troublemaker, and Porus, a broad-shouldered Indian boy. The book then works backwards, through the perspective of four teens and a cloud of rumors and reputations towards the events leading up to the accident. The story explains how Zarin, orphaned, traumatized, alone, and defiant, became a “girl like that.”

This book is interesting because two of the narrators are antagonists to the story, giving a broader viewpoint of the goings-on. The flashback nature of the narrative gives a cultural perspective, as the setting switches between Mumbai, India, and Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. There are also words from different languages used with a glossary in the back of the book. This story is full of examples of race, class, religion, and self-identity. The plot is intricate in the way it weaves each characters’ interactions and complicated cultural relationships.

*Contains moderate sexual content and some substance abuse.