



No Funeral for Nazia

Taha Kehar

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A woman's death brings grief, anger, and eventual peace to her loved ones in Taha Kehar's novel *No Funeral for Nazia*.

In life, Nazia always insisted on going her own way. In death, she continues that tradition, leaving scandalous instructions for her loved ones to throw a party instead of a funeral in her honor. Former friends and estranged relatives gather for an evening they will never forget. It renders irrevocable changes in their memories of, and relationships to, the deceased.

While each attendee cared for Nazia, they also have good reasons for holding grudges. Nazia's romantic affairs disrupted the lives of her sister Naureen, her friends Parveen and Dolly, and her daughter Sabeen. Yet their senses of victimhood prove fleeting. On instructions from Nazia, they undergo individual hypnotherapy sessions that shed harsh light on everyone.

A delicious series of petty squabbles and boisterous tantrums lead the suspenseful interactions. Though the party includes only six guests, their feuds fill Naureen's house with salacious secrets and whispered schemes that put Nazia's last wishes at risk. Everyone, even the hypnotherapist, brings their own baggage to the proceedings, further jeopardizing Nazia's and Naureen's plans.

The therapy sessions build up to the moment when Parveen, the most antagonistic of the group, and Saleem, the ex-lover at the heart of so many rumors and so much pain, bare their souls in return for their inheritance—with explosive results that forever alter the group's dynamics.

For all her real and imagined faults, a deceased heroine cared for those closest to her, finding clever ways to help them heal from beyond the grave in *No Funeral for Nazia*, a riveting domestic novel in which every life story contains more facets than individuals can understand.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (July / August 2024)

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