

BOTTOM OF THE HEAP

By Reeti Gadekar;
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Reeti Gadekar is back with yet another Additional Commissioner Nikhil Juneja story and this time the truth is even more twisted and the plot murkier. Dispatched by his boss to a north Indian village to get to the bottom of a road scam, Juneja finds out that village life isn't the stuff bucolic joy is made of and that the villagers are not "innocent people". The dusty roads of the village lead to a mystery darker than he could ever imagine; feudal and ignorant India seem to still inhabit a space they have occupied for centuries. A rape in the village, a gay couple and a politically well-connected village aristocrat add to the mystery. Many questions arise, though Juneja seeks answers to none. On the eve of Dussehra, he finally sets forth to fight his own battle between Good and Evil. Gadekar's first book, *Families at Home*, was nominated for the Man Asian Literary Prize (2007) and this one too makes for an interesting read.

