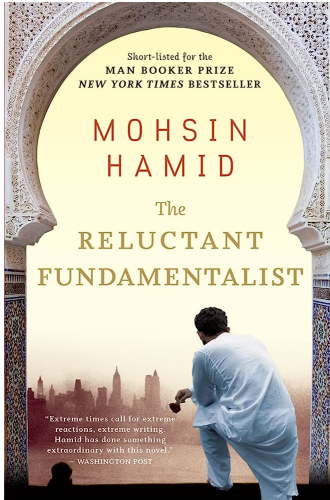


## The Reluctant Fundamentalist

By Mohsin Hamid



Excuse me, sir, but may I be of assistance? Ah, I see I have alarmed you. Do not be frightened by my beard. I am a lover of America ...' So speaks the mysterious stranger at a Lahore cafe as dusk settles. Invited to join him for tea, you learn his name and what led this speaker of immaculate English to seek you out. For he is more worldly than you might expect; better travelled and better educated. He knows the West better than you do. And as he tells you his story, of how he embraced the Western dream -- and a Western woman -- and how both betrayed him, so the night darkens. Then the true reason for your meeting becomes abundantly clear ...

Mohsin Hamid 's fiction has been translated into over 30 languages, received numerous awards, and been shortlisted for the **Man Booker Prize**.

### Discussion Questions

1. *'I was caught up in the symbolism of it all, the fact that someone had so visibly brought America to it's knees.*  
Do Changez's initial thoughts after seeing 9/11 on the news shock you?
  
2. *'I had been avoiding the evening news, preferring not to watch the partisan and sports-event-like coverage given to the mismatch between the American bombers and their twenty-first-century weaponry and the ill-equipped and ill-fed Afghan tribesmen below.'*  
How aware were you of the depth of the cross-cultural conflict?

