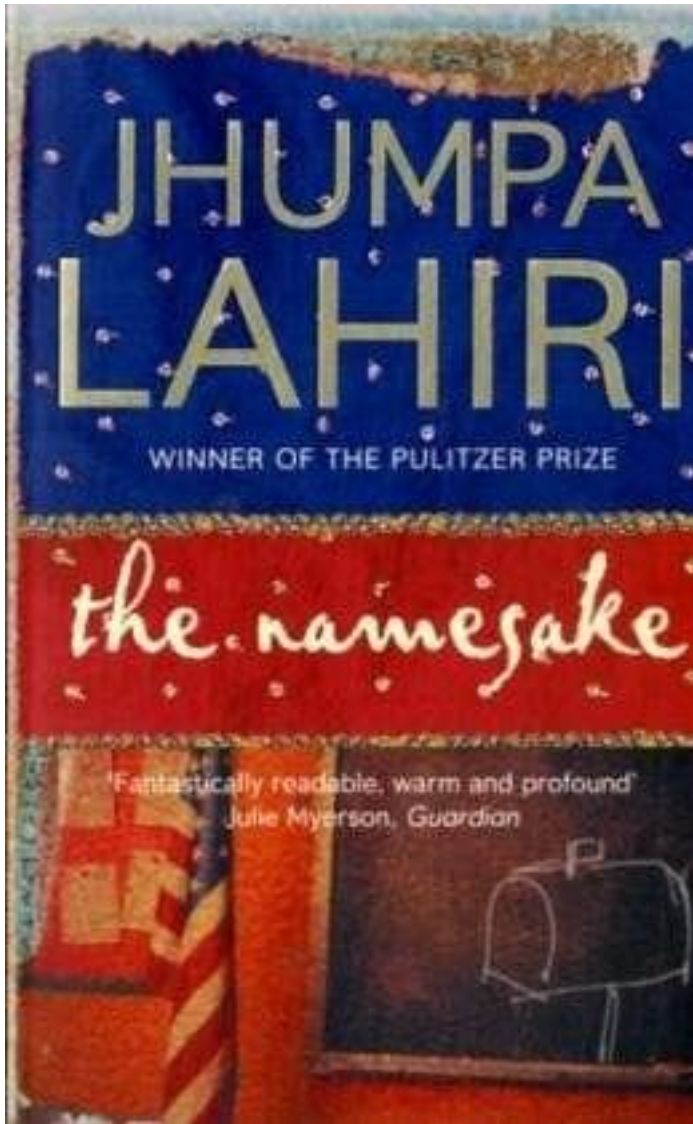


# The Namesake



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著者:Jhumpa Lahiri (Author)

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## Amazon.com Review

Any talk of *The Namesake*--Jhumpa Lahiri's follow-up to her Pulitzer Prize-winning debut, *Interpreter of Maladies*--must begin with a name: Gogol Ganguli. Born to an Indian academic and his wife, Gogol is afflicted from birth with a name that is neither Indian nor American nor even really a first name at all. He is given the name by his father who, before he came to America to study at MIT, was almost killed in a train wreck in India. Rescuers caught sight of the volume of Nikolai Gogol's short stories that he held, and hauled him from the train. Ashoke gives his American-born son the name as a kind of placeholder, and the awkward thing sticks.

Awkwardness is Gogol's birthright. He grows up a bright American boy, goes to Yale, has pretty girlfriends, becomes a successful architect, but like many second-generation immigrants, he can never quite find his place in the world. There's a lovely section where he dates a wealthy, cultured young Manhattan woman who lives with her charming parents. They fold Gogol into their easy, elegant life, but even here he can find no peace and he breaks off the relationship. His mother finally sets him up on a blind date with the daughter of a Bengali friend, and Gogol thinks he has found his match. Moushumi, like Gogol, is at odds with the Indian-American world she inhabits. She has found, however, a circuitous escape: "At Brown, her rebellion had been academic ... she'd pursued a double major in French. Immersing herself in a third language, a third culture, had been her refuge--she approached French, unlike things American or Indian, without guilt, or misgiving, or expectation of any kind." Lahiri documents these quiet rebellions and random longings with great sensitivity. There's no cleverness or showing-off in *The Namesake*, just beautifully confident storytelling. Gogol's story is neither comedy nor tragedy; it's simply that ordinary, hard-to-get-down-on-paper commodity: real life. --Claire Dederer

## From Publishers Weekly

One of the most anticipated books of the year, Lahiri's first novel (after 1999's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Interpreter of Maladies*) amounts to less than the sum of its parts. Hopscotching across 25 years, it begins when newlyweds Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli emigrate to Cambridge, Mass., in 1968, where Ashima immediately gives birth to a son, Gogol--a pet name that becomes permanent when his formal name, traditionally bestowed by the maternal grandmother, is posted in a letter from India, but lost in transit. Ashoke becomes a professor of engineering, but Ashima has a harder time assimilating, unwilling to give up her ties to India. A leap ahead to the '80s finds the teenage Gogol ashamed of his Indian heritage and his unusual name, which he sheds as he moves on to college at Yale and graduate school at Columbia, legally changing it to Nikhil. In one of the most telling chapters, Gogol moves into the home of a family of wealthy Manhattan WASPs and is initiated into a lifestyle idealized in Ralph Lauren ads. Here, Lahiri demonstrates her considerable powers of perception and her ability to convey the discomfort of feeling "other" in a world many would aspire to inhabit. After the death of Gogol's father interrupts this interlude, Lahiri again jumps ahead a year, quickly moving Gogol into marriage, divorce and a role as a dutiful if a bit guilt-stricken son. This small summary demonstrates what is most flawed about the novel: jarring pacing that leaves too many emotional voids between chapters. Lahiri offers a number of beautiful and moving tableaux, but these fail to coalesce into something more than a modest family saga. By any other writer, this would be hailed as a promising debut, but it fails to clear the exceedingly high bar set by her previous work.

## 作者介绍:

Jhumpa Lahiri was born 1967 in London, England, and raised in Rhode Island. She is a graduate of Barnard College, where she received a B.A. in English literature, and of Boston University, where she received an M.A. in English, M.A. in Creative Writing and M.A. in Comparative Studies in Literature and the Arts, and a Ph.D. in Renaissance Studies. She has taught creative writing at Boston University and the Rhode Island School of Design. Her debut collection, Interpreter of Maladies, won the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. It was translated into twenty-nine languages and became a bestseller both in the United States and abroad. In addition to the Pulitzer, it received the PEN/Hemingway Award, the New Yorker Debut of the Year award, an American Academy of Arts and Letters Addison Metcalf Award, and a nomination for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize. Lahiri was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2002. The Namesake is Jhumpa Lahiri's first novel. She lives in New York with her husband and son.

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## 评论

不错的书，充满了回忆的书

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