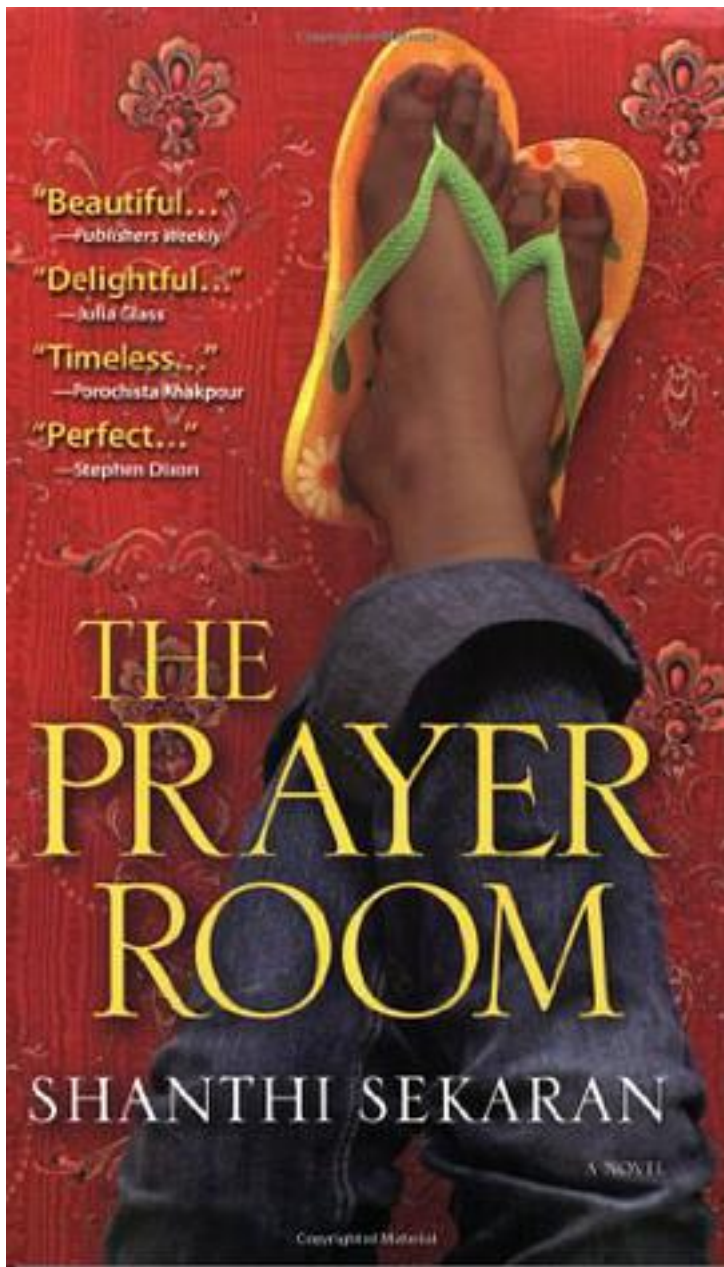


# The Prayer Room



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In 1974, the young and callow Englishman George Armitage goes to Madras in the hopes of returning with at least the beginning of his Ph.D. dissertation. Instead, he comes home with a bride named Viji, an Indian woman he barely knows. This seemingly unlikely pair eventually wind up in Sacramento, where they buy a ranch house and give birth to triplets.

In this new American world of shag carpets and pudding pops, Viji seeks consolation in her prayer room, which she visits frequently to gossip, sass, and seek advice from the framed portraits of her dead relatives. It is here where Viji feels most herself and where these deceased family members feel "as real to her as she'd been to them."

The relative calm of Viji's California existence is interrupted when George's father shows up on their doorstep, unexpected and unannounced. So when Viji's sister sends an out-of-the-blue invitation to visit India, she prepares for her first trip home in nearly eleven years, not knowing for sure if she'll ever return to the States.

The Prayer Room re-examines the meaning of family the people who live down the hall and the people who exist only in our memories.

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