



# The Gift of a Bride: A Tale of Anthropology, Matrimony and Murder

*Serena Nanda*

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# The Gift of a Bride: A Tale of Anthropology, Matrimony and Murder

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## **The Gift of a Bride: A Tale of Anthropology, Matrimony and Murder** Serena Nanda

This ethnographically based murder mystery is set within New York City's Indian community. A young Indian woman's arranged marriage brings her to the city to join her husband shortly after her wedding. The plot unfolds as the couple copes with joint family living, sexual and financial issues, and hostile neighbors. Central to the mystery are the cultural conflicts affecting both men and women negotiating the differences between American society and their own traditional upbringings. A major theme of the book is violence against women as this plays out both within domestic situations and through the gender inequalities of Indian and American society. Supportive characters such as an anthropology professor, an Indian detective and his American sidekick, a young, assimilated Indian neighbor, and an established family elder reveal various aspects of immigrant life. Through this rich, exciting and ethnographically detailed foray into one particular community, the reader learns about arranging a marriage, Hindu weddings and festivals, and the rich psychological motivations of culturally-patterned behavior of both immigrant men and women. The main principles of cultural anthropology and ethnographic method are woven into the novel, making it a compelling read in a wide range of undergraduate and graduate courses.

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