

Murder, She Wrote



REETI Gadekar is all smiles when I meet her at Café Turtle at Greater Kailash I. She has reasons to be. HarperCollins India is set to publish her debut book *Families at Home*, which was short-listed for the inaugural Man Asian Literary Prize last year.

V.K. Karthika of HarperCollins India, however, says the shortlist was not the reason they snapped up the manuscript: "Gadekar's book is first-rate fiction written about things that one reads in the paper everyday. She has a deep understanding of the city and the way it works. Also, the novel's characters are from the Delhi Police, not an institution that has been touched upon before. She has not compromised on the character of the city and that shows in her prose." *Families at Home* begins with the death of a girl from a well-to-do family in Delhi and evolves into a fight for justice as it turns out that it was not a suicide.

Gadekar, 37, who has flown down from Germany for correcting the proof, describes her work as a humourous crime novel and says it was written in response to the kind of detective fiction being churned out in Europe. "The detective is almost always someone above average, has a slight drinking problem, brooding and distant from people, but detective fiction is not a formulaic genre," says Gadekar, who has chosen the police force to solve the crime, and questions the notion of justice or the lack of it in the Capital. Her characters are real, funny and wicked little people, and you can safely add the book, which will be out early next month, to your summer reading list. —

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