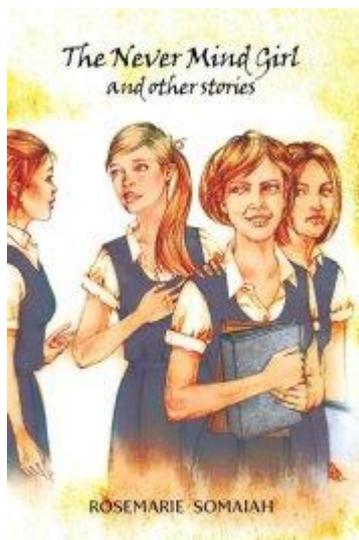


Book Review: The Never Mind Girl and Other Stories by Rosemarie Somaiah

May 16, 2017 by [Admin](#) [Leave a comment](#)

By Mehjabeen Aladdin



Title: The Never Mind Girl and Other Stories

Author: Rosemarie Somaiah

Publisher: Ethos Books Singapore

Pages: 104

Price: \$ 16.00 SGD

Rosemarie Somaiah's *The Never Mind Girl and Other Stories* is a collection of 15 short stories written in a contemporary style, depicting realistic and actual scenarios and situations that most young adult females go through in Singapore during their secondary school years in an all girls' school.

The main character in the book is a teenage girl called Anna whose life is surrounded by her family consisting of her mother, father, sister and two younger brothers. Somaiah writes about the different challenges and obstacles that Anna, along with her sister, have to face at school in terms of peer pressure, self esteem, tests of loyalty and friendship, striving for academic excellence, making big decisions and generally trying to fit into a society that has various other demands. Somaiah has efficiently laid out a specific scenario under each story involving the input and role play of various other characters who help Anna make her decisions and conclusions, thus leaving a "lesson learned" for the reader who might find the story relatable. In the early chapters, Anna uses the term "never mind" frequently until she is baptized as "The Never Mind Girl" by one of her colleagues at school. "I am not the never mind girl! I do care about things!" she retorts in an outburst to her mother when she is overcome with emotions and the tension to fit in.

Anna hails from a middle-class family where the mother is persevering and enterprising, trying to meet ends meet. There is not too much mention of the father who seems to play a passive role in Anna's life. In one of the stories there is even a mention of a sick grandmother. Anna and her family's pillar of support is the mother who unifies them. Anna constantly feels that she is out of sync with her peers and hence is in a constant dilemma wondering if she is doing things right or if she is being judged differently but her mother's guidance and encouragement is what gets her through.

The collaboration of short stories in a typical Singapore atmosphere can be empathised with by readers who experience similar struggles and confrontation during school years.

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