



# The Perfect Groom

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Very little has gone right in Nithya's young life. So, when a proposal from a young, handsome NRI comes along, her mother jumps at the opportunity and packs her daughter off to the US with her perfect groom.

Nithya seems to have settled in with Ashok, ostensibly happy, if as yet childless, in her new life. When an old flame comes back into her life, however, the cracks in her perfect marriage begin to show...

## **The Perfect Groom Details**

Date : Published June 12th 2013 by Indireads

ISBN :

Author : Sumeetha Manikandan

Format : ebook 140 pages

Genre : Romance, Fiction, Cultural, India

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## From Reader Review The Perfect Groom for online ebook

### Ipshita Ranjana says

The Perfect Groom by Sumeetha Manikandan has everything I love in romance--Drama,passion,well developed characters and an enjoyable story line.I don't know how the author managed to pack so much in just 140 pages. I pretty much guessed the twist in the story early on because the cover and the starting pages do state the obvious but I enjoyed discovering how the author played the whole story and weaved so many interesting situations.

Nithya,the protagonist is a mature and beautiful woman who has her own reasons in tolerating her sham of a marriage.Some may find her weak but I thought she had strength and although I do wish she had done some things differently,I still managed to understand her.The other characters in the story were well developed no matter how small part they played in the story.The evil characters added a certain flair to the story and though I did not care for them,the story sure would have been dull without them. Ashok is an interesting character and I won't comment him as its best if the reader discovers his character while reading.reading. Vasu as the old flame was the best character I have read in a while.He was so perfect in every way possible.

This one is for everyone who loves passionate romances with an enjoyable story line.

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### Aditi says

*The Perfect Groom* by Sumeetha Manikandan is yet another sweet love story and accounts of a young married woman who goes through the torments and pangs of her not-so-perfect marriage.

### Thanks to Indireads for providing me with a copy of this book, in return for an honest review.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, a German philosopher of the late 19th century, has once quoted:  
*"It is not a lack of love, but a lack of friendship that makes unhappy marriages."*

Sumeetha Manikandan, is one such author, who has described and made us felt the gravity of Nietzsche's powerful quotation, in her book, *The Perfect Groom*. The protagonist, Nithya's loneliness and unhappiness are the cry to many such women who too are trapped, like Nithya, in their loveless marriage.

Nithya, her sister and her mother are spending their lives as being the servant of Nithya's uncle's household. In order to save her daughter's not so glorious fate under their uncle's so called care, Nithya's mother sets her marriage with a rich, handsome NRI, and luckily, NRI Ashok was on the lookout for an obedient and well-behaved Indian wife and Nithya happens to fit the bill. But soon after reaching U.S, Nithya realizes that she is trapped in a loveless marriage, although Ashok provided her with all the material needs but he couldn't be a friend to her and when Nithya remains childless after her marriage, she undergoes the torments and bickering of her rude mother-in-law. There she comes across her old flame, Vasu, and soon Nithya finds an inkling in her heart, but being a married woman, her brain stops her from getting weak towards Vasu, whereas it is becoming difficult to control her heart's desire.

Sumeetha Manikandan's style of weaving this enticing journey of a lonely woman is quite crisp and emphatic. From the very beginning of the book, Nithya has been portrayed as a lonely girl, living under her uncle's care and then suddenly being forced to get married to a man who couldn't extend his hand in being the perfect companion to her, thus implicating that Nithya has been a victim of misery and bad luck and

unhappiness from a very tender age, and this captures every reader's soul towards her fate. I loved how the author had that control over all her characters, starting from Nithya's mom to her Uncle and Aunt to her mother-in-law. Each character is developed quite well and can be related to the mindsets of individuals who behave similarly in reality. Nithya's emotions are so raw and strikingly described that you can almost feel her pain and sadness from our very own hearts. The chemistry between Nithya and Vasu has also been handled very smoothly and is quite remarkably represented. Overall, the author might have written this novella based on a social issue, but she has crafted the tale very intriguingly and passionately.

Read this book for sure, to get enthralled by the author's use of simplistic words to create a remarkable journey of a young lonely married woman.

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## **Medha says**

### **Beautiful and touching**

I'm beginning to admire the author's emphasis on women's independence-both in thoughts+ action and financially. The two books of this author that I've read have a melancholic backdrop, but what's admirable is the way the protagonist wades her way through.

This book may appear adulterous to a conservative mind, but is really a pure and sweet love story, completed by picking up the broken pieces of the heart. Yes, many people have suffered by having closeted homosexual married partners and carried on the pain silently. This story has pointed out the hardest things such a woman faces in a overly traditional and sexist community

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## **Adiana Ray says**

Kudos to Sumeetha Manikandan for bringing out some culturally taboo subjects and then building a story around it. From describing how marriages are arranged by so called well meaning, 'charitable' relatives to spousal relationships within a marriage and a relationship outside it. She covers it all.

Circumstances have victimized Nithya but she rises above being a victim of her circumstances.

Her description and commentary on societal interactions are very tongue in cheek and hit the nail right on the head.

A thoroughly entertaining read.

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## **Nikita (NjKinny's World of Books & Stuff) says**

<http://njkinny.blogspot.in/2014/06/bl...>

*What do you do when you are stuck in a loveless marriage?*

*Should you try and come out of this predicament knowing that it will most likely break your mother's heart and ruin your sister's future?*

*Or Should you just go on living and feigning happiness to everyone around?*

Nithya is stuck in such a dark pit of a marriage where there is no way out for her. Ashok, her husband, is rich, handsome, lives in the U.S and provides Nithya with a comfortable existence except that all this is without any intimacy, love or support from him as her husband. There marriage is a sham. In the public eye,

Nithya is so blessed to have snatched such a promising catch; what with her being a dependent raised on the charity of her Uncle and Aunt who leave no occasion without reminding her of their sacrifices to support her, her sister and her mother. Add an always demanding mother-in-law who is always making Nithya feel guilty of her inability to produce a child or blaming her for all of Ashok's vices; and a father-in-law who knows everything but has chosen to keep silent and harass his daughter-in-law into silence too, the mix is deadly and depressing for Nithya.

*What will she do?*

*Will she fight against this injustice done to her or remain mute and let her Uncle, Ashok and her father-in-law threaten her with warnings of ruining her family's future if she tells anyone the truth?*

The Perfect Groom is a difficult book to rate. While at first glance you think that this is a typical arranged marriage gone wrong story, once you start getting better acquainted to Nithya and the other characters, you start noticing the novelty of the book. While the plot is nothing new, the treatment and the narration make this book a memorable read.

I was hooked right from the start and felt totally invested right till the very end. A story that made me feel outraged, helpless, angry and then sad for Nithya, I just wanted to punish the people who thought they could easily sacrifice a person's life as if she was nothing. Making a person feel indebted to you is one thing but making him feel helpless, hopeless and ashamed is totally another and this is what Nithya had been made to feel all her life. While her mother had been made a servant, she and her sister had been a constant object of ridicule and made to feel worthless and indebted to her Uncle and Aunt's gesture of providing a roof over their heads.

Sumeetha makes her characters real and we can easily connect them with the many similar people we have met in our own lives. Taking a very common concept of arranged marriage in India, Sumeetha has brought to light the exploitation, unreasonable demands and the complaints a woman faces at the hands of her family or relatives for things that are not in her hands but apparently still her doing. Nithya is a strong woman who has endured the worst in her life but is still hopeful of one day leaving her depressing marriage behind and find a new life. I admired Nithya's strength and felt sorry for her. Her constant scrutiny by her mother-in-law and the other women in her family and their conscious ignorance of her feelings and self-respect made me feel very angry and frustrated. I wanted Nithya to say something to them, to give them a piece of her mind but still could understand her reasons for keeping silent. Ashok, is a foul mouthed, spoilt and a total pig, in my opinion. He is unconcerned of his wife's happiness and treats her badly. Had he wanted, he could have saved Nithya from this sham marriage but instead he married her under false pretenses and then told her the truth knowing fully that she could not do anything now. His mother and father are also the same or even an higher degree of hypocrites and signify the class of people who act all high and mighty with big principles but are in truth the lowest level of scum with their narrow thinking and obsolete ideals. Nithya's mother lacks the backbone to stand up to her step sister but still manages to shield her daughters on several occasions through pure diplomacy. The romance when it comes in Nithya's life is like a burst of fresh air. I loved the emotional and physical chemistry between Nithya and her love (I wont tell you his name. Read the book to find out.) and fervently hoped that she get her much deserved happily-ever-after.

The story is beautifully set in the beautiful Mylapore and Sumeetha gives us a glimpse into the life and aspirations of a bride and her sense of responsibility after marriage. The scenes are emotionally charged and take the reader on a roller coaster ride which is bound to leave you shaken and touched.

I immensely loved the book and congratulate the author on taking up such a serious topic and doing justice to it. The story of many women in India, I think everyone will relate to Nithya. Super shiny **5 on 5** to The Perfect Groom and a strong recommendation that you do read the book. I definitely look forward to read

more from the author.

I received the book from the author and the tour organizers and I am very thankful to them. The above review is my honest and unbiased opinion and in no way influenced.

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### **Roopa Raveendran Menon says**

In *The Perfect Groom*, Sumeetha Manikandan explores the stereotypes and politics of finding 'the perfect groom' with effortless ease. Effectively using a string of characters with rigid and narrow mindset that lurks around in our society, she brings out the very Indian idea of marriage- that of one marrying the family along with one's spouse- very well. The protagonist Nithya is the one to watch out for in this book- she is bold, caring, confident, independent with a strong voice and a mind of her own. She holds her own nicely. Sumeetha's easy going and natural conversational writing style gives the story a wonderful flow making it a very interesting and enjoyable read.

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### **Reet Singh says**

Quite an engaging read! I enjoyed the simplicity of the prose and the clever twists. Sumeetha Manikandan, the author, has portrayed an independent yet loyal female lead, one who deals well with all the wickedness of conniving relatives. She is so generous and forgiving, that I felt almost sorry when some of the evil characters got their comeuppance! Must read!

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### **Deepika Ramesh says**

Nithya, the protagonist of Sumeetha Manikandan's 'The Perfect Groom', doesn't seem like a stranger to me. I have known her all my life...

Full review here: <https://worncorners.wordpress.com/201...>

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### **Leela Pal Chaudhuri says**

This was first my 'novella' and it was the perfect nightcap over two nights. Simple, succinct, fluent and flowing, Sumeetha's easy style smoothly pulled me into Nithya's life as she manoeuvred her way pre and post marriage to emerge a survivor. Neat plot and storyline. Topical concerns - gay man, straight woman trapped in a loveless marriage. I liked the author's handling of the wife's empathy and sympathy for her erring husband contrasted with the straightforward perception of sheer wrongdoing in Vasu's perspective. Character constructs were consistent, though personally speaking, I found the Chittappa's manipulations a little hard to digest, because it just seemed so cruel and heartless; similarly I found Nithya's lies a bit too uncomfortable, but they were all in keeping with the background story, the situations and the characterisation. I guess there must be people like this amongst us, and Sumeetha evoked that very well. Look forward to more novellas and novels Sumeetha!

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## Smitha says

A book I got free from Indireads as a 'joining offer' on Goodreads. Never to say no to a free book, I downloaded the book that appealed the most to me.

Nithya has been married to Ashok for three years. Ashok is the perfect groom on paper. Successful, handsome, from a 'good family', things that Nithya's family couldn't even dream about. Nithya and her sister were brought up by their widowed mother, who survived on the scraps that her step-sister and brother-in-law handed out to them. When Nithya's uncle brought the alliance from Ashok's family, it was as if their luck had finally turned. Nithya's mother could ask for nothing more, she just couldn't believe her luck. Such a wonderful, son-in-law, and his family who didn't even care that they had nothing to give as dowry. Nithya had other plans, she had wanted to work, but when things seemed so perfect, she didn't have much to argue with. After all, she realized how much it would ease the pressure on her mother to see one of her daughters married and 'settled'.

After the wedding Nithya flew to the US where the true story of her marriage unfolds. A story that is as sad as it could be true of so many brides in our midst. It is in many ways a true reflection of our society. The stigmas, the censure, the one-up-manship, the need to 'marry off' a daughter that could so easily ruin lives. It is an easy, quick read, but one that leaves you thinking. I loved the characters, especially Nithya. Her strength and her determination really came through. Her ability to make peace with what fate dealt her and make the most of her life..

I think I enjoyed the book far more than I thought I would. I had thought of it as just a filler book, just to read between two good books, but it turned out to be a surprisingly good read. A 4/5 book for me and I will be on the look out for more books from the author. This is the second interesting Indireads book I've read in the last few months. I'm definitely going to be browsing there more often.

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## Kru says

This is my first book as part of the Indireads Reviewer program. Need to mention the beautifully illustrated cover, by Shehna Khan. Beautiful bride with a masked groom... quite intriguing.

The story is a first person narrative by Nithya, a girl from Mylapore, Chennai, and starts with her troubled marriage to Ashok, an NRI. She recollects her past, the circumstances under which her marriage took place. Sumeetha has beautifully accounted these moments, just sufficient to keep it crisp. The narrative is to the point, nothing can be seen has a drag. It is a sad state of affairs to think that despite being a literate, and a working woman, she has to embrace the life thrust on her. The way she keeps things from others, brings out the beauty in her character. Though hurt to the core, worried about hurting others.

Some of the many issues faced by women are highlighted, and handled deftly. Sumeetha excels in the characterization of the novel. All the characters are portrayed, in varying tones of grey, rather than, just black or white. On the whole... Liked it.

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## Charanya says

4 Stars!

There's something to be said for nostalgia and how reading a book triggers memories in your head. This is my second book of the author, I cherished *The Lines of Mehendi*, I loved this one too but a little less than the other. But through a book she made me miss my hometown, the food and everything about it. I never fully understood when other people comment on how the author based this book on their hometown and how it was so relatable. Now I get it :)

The relatability ends there though, this book was a rollercoaster of emotions. Nithya feels indebted to her Uncle and agrees to a marriage with a guy whom she barely knows and moves to the US. Little did she know what was in store..

The relationship with her sister and mother were shown beautifully and with care. I understood the situation but unlike protagonist in other book this circumstance is not as terrible. Nithya could have stood up for herself a lot earlier, but she puts herself behind and waits for the right time. A chance encounter with a person from her past sets events in motion in her life

I zipped through the book in a single day. The final chapters had me edges almost like a tele serial :) Vasu was well written and stands by Nithya and her family till the end. I found that honorable. The Uncle and the mother in law were typical characters shown as delusional and evil people, which added to the entertainment. Ashok did not have a backbone and was horrible to Nithya, so for most of the book, I was not happy with him. But most of all, this is a book about Nithya, she is shown as silent sufferer and slowly she learns to stand up for herself and wants to lead her life, become independent and be with her beloved in her own terms. I struggled to relate to her giving in to her feelings which led to a misunderstanding. But well, we get our HEA and strong-ish heroine in the bargain

This book was a little rough around the edges, the second one was clean and wonderful. I am not a fan of short forms for chat language and a few dialogues were stilted, maybe that's why :) and hence the 4 stars. It was brilliant, but not perfect

This book also made me feel like I didn't want it to end. This author has definitely become an auto-buy for me! Looking forward to more :)

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### **Lakshya Chauhan says**

A week before I got this novella on my mail. And yesterday after my hectic week I held on to it to read. It was 3 hrs of suspense excitement that bound me with the book and I finished it by the end. Reader easily get connected with the central character Nithya very well characterised by the Author. One feels the emotions of Nithya himself while reading.

The story is fast paced and only at a place u feel it jumped a bit between chapter 10 and 11. probably I was expecting some more of Nithya and Vasu in US.

Overall a great read. Go ahead and grab a copy. :)

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### **Rajlakshmi HB says**

In short "*The Perfect Groom*" is a novelette about a young woman, trapped in a loveless marriage, awaiting a day when she can walk away from the relationship. Can she escape the fate that her Chitappa enforced on her? Can she be happy and live a life with the one she truly loves? That is for you to find out.

I finished the book in two hours. The story is short but it keeps you hooked. An overbearing mother-in-law forcing Nithya for a grandson, probing relatives and a shocking secret about her husband that she found only after the wedding, Nithya's life isn't an easy one. And at every insult targeted towards her, I felt a pinch in my heart. She is one of those self sacrificing souls who would do anything for their family, but what I love about her is she still dreams of being independent. Even in crisis, she has a goal and a plan. And she isn't gloating over her not-so-fairy-tale life.

More on my blog - <http://destinychildosheen.blogspot.co...>

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## **RustyJ says**

It's a 3.5 actually.

Sumeetha Manikandan's novella The Perfect Groom is an easy read. The language is easy and it is refreshing to see a novel that is targeted at the Indian reader and therefore, does not explain pakoras, samosas, appalam, amma, mama etc.,

The plotline is simple enough. Nithya is caught in an unhappy marriage in a distant country with herself for company. How she escapes from the unhappy marriage, a manipulative uncle, an abusive and domineering mother in law, in the process finding a knight in shining armour forms the rest of the story.

Though the storyline appears cliched when stated simply, the author brings in freshness in the manner of narration and in its simplicity. The story itself is narrated in the first person perspective, by the protagonist. The protagonist is pulled between the urge to leave the marriage and wait until her younger sister gets married is very well portrayed. Though this is a cliché, it is a reality. The conflict is very well portrayed.

There is consistency in the behaviour of various characters: Nithya the protagonist, Ashok the 'imperfect' husband, the mother in law, the uncle, Vasu the friend, to name a few.

The evolution of Nithya's character is interesting as well - how she refuses to act according to the dictates of another, though it would appear to be the best course, is the highlight of the book.

The heroine ends up riding into the sunset with the knight in shining armour and the book comes to a happy ending. I would have preferred it if she had set out into the sunset on her own, on a voyage of self discovery instead of riding away with the knight. That would have given the book the twist and the message that happiness lies in discovering oneself and it need not involve riding into the sunset with the handsome hulk.

In conclusion, very good piece of work for a debutante and certainly far more readable than many of the romance novels out there in the market. Hopefully, this book will come out in print and get its due. More importantly, I hope the author, who has shown excellent promise continues to write more.

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