



You Must Like Cricket?: Memoirs of an Indian Cricket Fan

Soumya Bhattacharya

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The great C L R James once asked: 'What do they know of cricket who only cricket know?' For some of us answering that can keep you awake at night.

Soumya Bhattacharya knows this: he has a steady job, a loving wife, a daughter he dotes on. But most of all he has cricket. Or perhaps more accurately: cricket has him. Ever since he can remember, he's loved the game. From his first knockabouts on the living-room carpet - with his mother's paper bats and balls - he progressed to *Test Match Special* on short-wave, then to the whole panoply of obsession: one-dayers, Test matches, TV highlights, re-runs of TV highlights, always following one team - India. When you come from a country where the game is more than a religion, you must like cricket, right?

In this sparkling memoir of a lifetime spent in the company of eleven men, a green field and a billion other worshippers, Soumya Bhattacharya gives us a guided tour of the soul of a cricket obsessive. Part reportage, part travelogue, part cultural politics, *You Must Like Cricket?* takes us from his home in Kolkata to Lord's and back again as Bhattacharya explores the joys and the lows (mostly the lows) of a thirty-year love affair, how one game has become so closely tied to a nation's identity, and the troubling hold cricket has over him. But if your home ground was called Eden Gardens, where else would you rather be?



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