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# When Morning Comes



## Synopsis

Zanele is skipping school and secretly plotting against the apartheid government. The police can't know. Her mother and sister can't know. Her best friend Thabo, schoolboy turned gang member, can tell she's up to something. But he has troubles of his own--a deal gone wrong and some powerful enemies. Across the bridge, in the wealthy white suburbs, Jack plans to spend his last days in Johannesburg burning miles on his beat-up Mustang--until he meets a girl with an unforgettable face from the simmering black township--Soweto. Working in her father's shop, Meena finds a packet of banned pamphlets. They lead to a mysterious black girl with a secret, a dangerous gangster with an expensive taste in clothes, and an engaging white boy who drives a battered red car. A series of chance meetings changes everything. A chain of events is set in motion--a failed plot, a murdered teacher, and a secret movement of students that has spread across the township. And the students will rise.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up "Zanele is a student who is secretly plotting against her South African government. Jack loves his Mustang and lives in a wealthy white neighborhood. Thabo, Zanele's best friend, has many enemies because he is in a gang. Then there is Meena, who finds illegal pamphlets containing what the government claims are terrorists' musings. Instead of throwing them away, she keeps them. Through all four characters, readers learn about apartheid in Johannesburg, South Africa, in the days leading up to the Soweto Uprising of 1976. The uprising was a protest led by black students over the Bantu Education Act, which enforced racial separation in schools. With its

issues of racial inequality, the story is easily relatable for today's teens. The narrative is spare and engaging, but it also unloads a wealth of information about the time and a vivid sense of the setting. With careful detail, Raina describes Jack's spacious, wealthy home as well as the grit in Zanele's township, where she lives in a tin shack. The theme of how individual actions can have wide reach runs throughout. A glossary of Zulu and Afrikaans words incorporated in the story and an appended historical note further assist readers. VERDICT An eye-opening view of a rarely covered time and place in YA literature, this title offers rich opportunities for discussion and classroom sharing.â "Maeve Dodds, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, NC --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

"The presentation of characters with different racial identities beautifully highlights how those identities shape the characters' understandings and experiences...Readers who love the fast pace and high stakes of dystopian teen literature should snag this book. This timely reminder of the power and passion of young people contextualizes current student protests by honoring those of the past." (Kirkus Reviews, starred review 2016-11-02)"Raina's story powerfully demonstrates the high stakes of the teenagers' choices while maintaining a bracing pace that builds steady tension. Each character's distinct voice contributes to a sense of imminent change...A riveting and accomplished debut." (Publishers Weekly, starred review 2016-11-28)"The story is easily relatable for today's teens. The narrative is spare and engaging, but it also unloads a wealth of information about the time and a vivid sense of the setting...An eye-opening view of a rarely covered time and place in YA literature, this title offers rich opportunities for discussion and classroom sharing." (School Library Journal 2016-12-01)"Readers...will recognize parallel themes from youth involvement in the American civil rights movement (and) historical fiction fans will find common ground here with teens who favor dramatic thrillers." (Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books 2017-01-22)"A simply riveting read from cover to cover, *When Morning Comes* is especially recommended for both school and community library YA Fiction collections." (Midwest Book Review 2016-12-15)

Intertwined with the real life events which occurred under Apartheid in 1976 South Africa, readers follow four young adult narrators as their lives gradually converge with each other and the monumental events of the Soweto Student Uprising. Each character crafted by Raina gives unique and historically-informed insights into the conditions before, during, and after this crucial and relevant moment in very-recent history. Skillfully crafted and perfectly paced, she keeps readers engrossed through suspense, drama, comedy, and just the right amount of romance. A page-turner

from start to finish, I picked this book up and did not put it down until the back cover. Employing an accessible and informative glossary of local terms and phrases used by characters, as well as links to more resources for those who want to learn about the resistance against Apartheid, this book can be both a valuable resource and a starting point for further learning. For YA-enthusiasts, students, teachers, activists, and life-long learners, I cannot recommend this book highly enough. This story gives representation and voice to a time, place, narratives, and people who deserve more recognition and from whom so much can be learned. #WeNeedDiverseBooks like this!

Clever, insightful, and beautifully-wrought "Raina's debut novel is a powerful read. The plight and upheaval of 1970's apartheid-era South Africa is as relevant today as ever before. When Morning Comes is a coming-of-age story set forty years ago, but there's no doubt that its narratives will resonate with the YA reader growing up in 2017. Themes of racial tension and reckoning, star-crossed love, and youth standing its ground against the old guard abound. Raina's four young protagonists are bright, bold, and resourceful in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. This novel is a blueprint for peaceful resistance that will benefit any young reader lucky enough to cross its path.

A skillfully written book, with characters who are unusually and inconspicuously complex, and yet likeable and relatable. An important read for anyone interested in the history of South Africa, with an engaging and insightful view of that time and place.

Set in South Africa in 1976, When Morning Comes follows four young people in the events leading up to, during, and after the Soweto Uprising. Told from four perspectives, the reader is immediately drawn in to observe how gradually the narrators' lives intertwine. When Morning Comes is the perfect balance of the drama, romance, and practical comedy of a young adult novel and the deeper political exploration of robust historical fiction. It delves into issues of race and social class, illustrating how societal conditions affect individual lives, while maintaining a fast-paced plot. I was particularly drawn to the character of Zanele, whose strength will inspire young readers to stand up for what they believe in. Adults and younger people alike will appreciate this page-turner for its depth, eloquence, and suspense. I look forward to reading Ms. Raina's future works.

A wonderful introduction to the Soweto uprising in South Africa for younger readers. Raina delivers a diverse range of characters that readers of any age can relate to, coupled with a driving narrative

and unexpected finale. The book has an easy-to-use glossary and sources for those interested in finding out more about Apartheid and resistance to it. When Morning Comes would be an enjoyable reading assignment for students in secondary school settings. For an important historical story told through young romance and rebellion, readers would be hard-pressed to find a better book.

Fantastic read. I love how the intricate plot lines weave in and out. A great depiction of a historical movement in South Africa that deserves more recognition. All of the specific cultural details and lovable characters makes it especially engaging. Something that young adults and adults alike will enjoy. I highly recommend!

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