

READING GROUP GUIDE

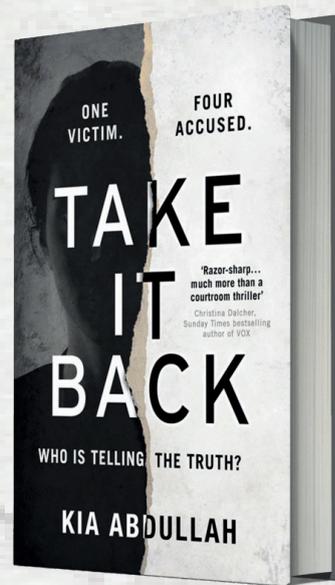
'Razor-sharp insight...much more than a courtroom thriller'

Christina Dalcher, *Sunday Times* bestselling author of *Vox*

'Taut, gritty and compelling. This book deserves to be huge'

Louise Jensen, million-copy bestselling author of *The Sister*

#TakeItBack
@KiaAbdullah



ABOUT THE BOOK

The Victim: A sixteen-year-old girl with facial deformities, neglected by an alcoholic mother. Who accuses the boys of something unthinkable.

The Defendants: Four handsome teenage boys from hardworking immigrant families. All with corroborating stories.

Take your place on the jury.

Who will you find guilty?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



KIA ABDULLAH is an author and travel writer. She has contributed to *The Guardian*, BBC and Channel 4 News, and most recently *The New York Times* commenting on a variety of issues affecting the Muslim community.

Kia currently travels the world as one half of the travel blog *Atlas & Boots*, which receives over 200,000 views per month.

You can find out more about Kia and her books at kiaabdullah.com

MEET THE CHARACTERS OF TAKE IT BACK

Zara Kaleel:

Zara grew up in East London and rebelled against the expectations placed on her by her parents to become a top barrister. She gave up all the prestigious trappings of her London Chambers to work directly with victims of sexual assault at the non-profit, Artemis House. Taking on Jodie's case forces Zara to confront demons in her own past and her relationship with her family. As the trial continues, Zara faces intense media scrutiny and finds herself on trial in the court of public opinion.

Jodie Wolfe:

Sixteen-year-old Jodie was born with neurofibromatosis, which has left her disabled and with severe facial deformities. Jodie has often been teased, but has a close friend in Nina. Jodie's mother is an alcoholic and her father left them when she was a baby. Jodie reaches out to Zara at Artemis House when she thinks no one else will believe her story and struggles throughout the book with the fall-out from her decision to stand by her accusations and pursue justice.

Amir Rabbani:

Amir is the boy every girl at school has a crush on and the unofficial ringleader of the group of boys. The handsome cricket captain is universally popular and his family are held in high regard in the community. He's always been kind to Jodie in the past, which makes the accusations against him that bit harder to believe.

Hassan Tanweer:

Hassan's parents have worked hard to offer him every possible opportunity in life and protect their son fiercely throughout the novel. He isn't one to take any insult lightly and often forgets to think before he speaks, which lands him in hot water on more than one occasion.

Mohammed Ahmed:

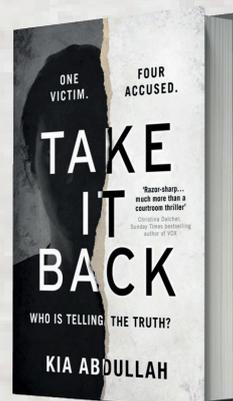
In his spare time Mo helps his mother in her tailor's workshop. Mo loves working with fabric to create beautiful garments and once dreamed of becoming a Savile Row tailor, but knows he will pursue a safe and stable career that will let him look after his family. In the past Mo has helped Jodie in classes they shared. Mo remains reserved and inscrutable throughout most of the investigation and trial.

Farid Khan:

Farid is kind hearted by nature and loves playing football. He is a loyal friend, but it is this unwavering loyalty to his three friends that gets him pulled into Jodie's case.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Did you believe Jodie or the boys initially? Did you change your mind about who you believed as the novel progressed and the trial began?
2. Discuss the role of the media in the novel.
3. Zara has a complicated relationship with her family. Do you think they reached a turning point during the story?
4. At one point Zara says: 'Women aren't born warriors; we learn to fight because we have to.' To what extent do you think this is true for the different women in this book and in real life more generally?
5. Mothers play a key role in the book, especially in terms of the things they do and don't do for their children. Discuss the different mother figures in the novel and the different parts they play.
6. What did you make of the friendship dynamic between Amir, Mo, Farid and Hassan?
7. If you were Zara, is there anything you would have done differently in the book and why?
8. Discuss the theme of appearance versus reality in the novel.
9. As a reader you are taken a journey throughout the novel. Discuss the ways the author pulled you into the narrative as if you were a member of the jury.
10. What did you make of that ending!?! And what do you imagine will happen next for the main characters?



READERS LOVE *TAKE IT BACK*

'A brilliant, powerful, moving and intelligent psychological thriller and courtroom drama that pushes all the buttons'

'It's a game changer for crime books in the UK'

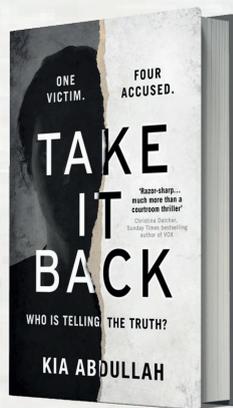
'A rare gem and deserves to be recognised as such'

'It's not often a book has me hooked as much as this one did – once I'd started this, I was never going to put it down'

'This is the best book I've read this year'

'Compelling, thrilling, heartbreaking and shocking in equal measure. Each time I was convinced about the plot I was shocked by the next twist, right to the very end'

'A brilliant courtroom thriller... And the ending wow, just wow. This book should hit the bestseller list running'



OTHER READING

If you loved *Take It Back* then we think you will also love these books:

Thirteen by Steve Cavanagh
Anatomy of a Scandal by Sarah Vaughan
He Said/She Said by Erin Kelly
Apple Tree Yard by Louise Doughty
You Don't Know Me by Imran Mahmood