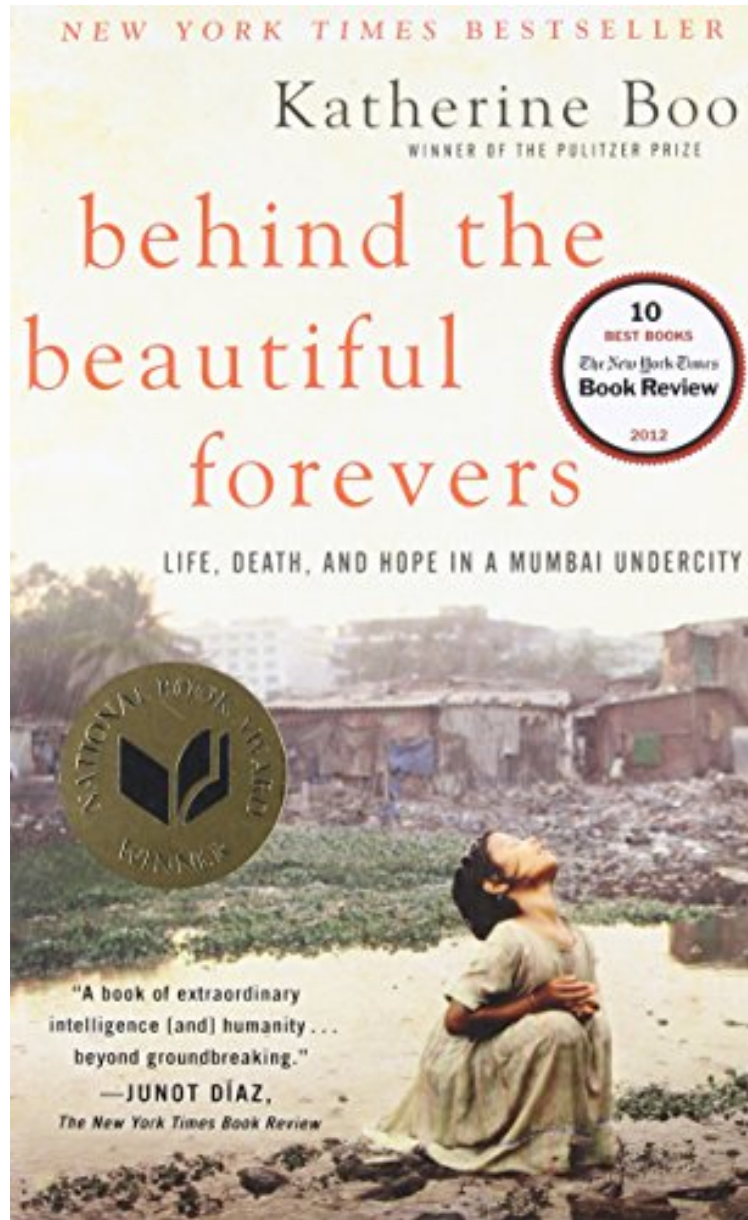


(Mobile book) Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity

## Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity

*Katherine Boo*

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**Katherine Boo : Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Enlightening, moving and inspiring storyBy Phil (not) in MagnoliaThis is a wonderful and enlightening book. The story is familiar - living in one of the slums of a large city in India - but it is timeless and still inspiring. A worthwhile reminder of how poverty is so widespread even as the large cities of India continue to develop and the middle class grows. The country is so large that any group is still going to consist of vast numbers of people, and I cannot imagine how many years it will take until the lower classes so well described in this book are able to rise to a more hopeful life. It takes a while until the basis for the title of the book becomes clear. It turns out that the road alongside the airport, taking people from their arrivals and departures and leading to the modern hotels and relative wealth of the city, is lined with large signs, advertisements that say 'Beautiful Forever' as part of the products slogan, again and again. It is behind these road signs, erected not only to promote the product but also to block the view from the roadway to the slums, so that travelers and other more fortunates are not disturbed by such sights as they pass by. I enjoyed this book as well as learned from it, insights into some of the day to day details of life for these people, and how they manage within their own sub societies to scrape out a living. Imagine, if you can, earning money by foraging through garbage for any small scraps of metal or plastic that could be of value and could be sold to recyclers or scrap agents, at best earning pennies each day and at times not having enough money for even the simplest meal. It is a life that is hard to imagine even when reading about it, but it exists and is very real to those who live there today and will continue to live in these circumstances for the foreseeable future. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. EyeopeningBy Owen BrownStunning description of impoverishment and corruption in urban India. The pressures, hopes, goals and losses show a world of difference, show where poverty and impoverished institutions lead, and make clear the fact that what are thought to be inalienable rights and acceptable behaviors in the West are a fiction of our own making. The Forever was brilliantly collated over years of research. Boo is an acute and sensitive observer. Throughout the work one feels that she's making these conversations up. Don't. Read her afterword, where she describes her working methods. This view of lives so different from ours should be required for every HS student in the U.S. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I found this book fascinating and yet incredibly sad. The fact that people still live in incredibly ...By KenI found this book fascinating and yet incredibly sad. The fact that people still live in incredibly poor conditions, while others are living in luxurious, two, three homes and yachts, really infuriates me. Katherine Boo's style of writing made it hard, (for me) to get through. I also found that for such a highly rated book, it had a lot of spelling and punctuation errors. I normally read a book in two to three days. This one took me about three months. It did give an incredibly, detailed view of how those in the slums of India live.

In this brilliant, breathtaking book by Pulitzer Prize winner Katherine Boo, a bewildering age of global change and inequality is made human through the dramatic story of families striving toward a better life in Annawadi, a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport. As India starts to prosper, the residents of Annawadi are electric with hope. Abdul, an enterprising teenager, sees a fortune beyond counting in the recyclable garbage that richer people throw away. Meanwhile Asha, a woman of formidable ambition, has identified a shadier route to the middle class. With a little luck, her beautiful daughter, Annawadi's most-everything girl, might become its first female college graduate. And even the poorest children, like the young thief Kalu, feel themselves inching closer to their dreams. But then Abdul is falsely accused in a shocking tragedy; terror and global recession rock the city; and suppressed tensions over religion, caste, sex, power, and economic envy turn brutal. With intelligence, humor, and deep insight into what connects people to one another in an era of tumultuous change, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, based on years of uncompromising reporting, carries the reader headlong into one of the twenty-first century's hidden worlds and into the hearts of families impossible to forget. Winner of the National Book Award | The PEN/John Kenneth Galbraith Award | The Los Angeles Times Book Prize | The American Academy of Arts and Letters Award | The New York Public Library's Helen Bernstein Book Award NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The New York Times The Washington Post O: The Oprah Magazine USA Today New York The Miami Herald San Francisco Chronicle Newsday NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The New Yorker People Entertainment Weekly The Wall Street Journal The Boston Globe The Economist Financial Times Newsweek/The Daily Beast Foreign Policy The Seattle Times The Nation St. Louis Post-Dispatch The Denver Post Minneapolis Star Tribune Salon The Plain Dealer The Week Kansas City Star Slate Time Out New York Publishers Weekly NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER A book of extraordinary intelligence [and] humanity . . . beyond groundbreaking. Junot Diaz, The New York Times Book Review Reported like Watergate, written like Great Expectations, and handily the best international nonfiction in years. New York This book is both a tour de force of social justice reportage and a literary masterpiece. Judges Citation for the PEN/John Kenneth Galbraith Award [A] landmark book. The Wall Street Journal A triumph of a book. Amartya Sen There are books that change the way you feel and see; this is one of them. Adrian Nicole LeBlanc [A] stunning piece of narrative nonfiction . . . [Katherine] Boo's prose is electric. O: The Oprah Magazine Inspiring, and irresistible . . . Boo's extraordinary achievement is twofold. She shows us how people in the most desperate circumstances can find the resilience to hang on to their humanity. Just as important, she makes us care. People

.com Best Books of the Month, February 2012: Katherine Boo spent three years among the residents of the Annawadi slum, a sprawling, cockeyed settlement of more than 300 tin-roof huts and shacks in the shadow of Mumbais International Airport. From within this sumpy plug of slum Boo unearths stories both tragic and poignant--about residents efforts to raise families, earn a living, or simply survive. These unforgettable characters all nurture far-fetched dreams of a better life. As one boy tells his brother: Everything around us is roses. And were like the s\*\*t in between. A New Yorker writer and recipient of a Pulitzer Prize and a MacArthur Genius grant, Boos writing is superb and the depth and courage of her reporting from this hidden world is astonishing. At times, its hard to believe this is nonfiction. --Neal ThompsonFrom BooklistWhile the distance between rich and poor is growing in the U.S., the gap between the haves and have-nots in India is staggering to behold. This first book by a New Yorker staff writer (and Pulitzer Prizewinning reporter for the Washington Post) jolts the readers consciousness with the opposing realities of poverty and wealth in a searing visit to the Annawaldi settlement, a flimflam slum that has recently sprung up in the western suburbs of the gigantic city of Mumbai, perched tentatively along the modern highway leading to the airport and almost within a stones throw of new, luxurious hotels. We first meet Abdul, whose daily grind is to collect trash and sell it; in doing so, he has lifted his large family above subsistence. Boo takes us all around the community, introducing us to a slew of disadvantaged individuals who, nevertheless, draw on their inner strength to not only face the dreary day but also ponder a day to come that will, perhaps, be a little brighter. Sympathetic yet objective and eloquently rendered. --Brad HooperFrom BookforumBehind the Beautiful Forevers is a testimony to the transcendent power of reportorial humility. Across almost three-hundred pages in which there is scarcely a single false note, Boo has managed a task I would have thought impossible for a foreign journalist in a Mumbai slum: to merge her eyes almost completely with those of her characters. Jonathan Shainin