



Bloody Seoul

written by Sonia Patel

About the Book

Genre: Fiction

Format: Paperback
224 pages, 6 x 9

ISBN: 9781947627215

Reading Level: Grade 6

Interest Level: Grades 8–College

Guided Reading Level: Z+

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
N/A

Lexile™ Measure: HL560L

*Reading level based on the Lexile™ Measure

Themes: Asian/Asian American Interest, Families, Fathers, Identity/Self Esteem/Confidence, Teen Interest, YA interest

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/bloody-seoul

SYNOPSIS

Rocky's the most loyal 16-year-old you'll ever meet: loyal to the Three Star Pa gang, which his father runs in Seoul, Korea; loyal to his best friends, who accompany him everywhere he goes; loyal to his ever-escalating public bullying of Ha-na, a girl at school; and, finally, loyal to the memory of his mother, even though there are some things about her that he tries to forget. He loves his friends, his city, and the power he wields. But when he catches his father in a lie, the truth is exposed, and his life begins to unravel--and Rocky has no idea where it's going to lead.

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

BACKGROUND

A Note About Gangs

At the core of the novel lies the reality that Rocky's father is a member of an organized crime syndicate. While media often romanticizes gang violence, its impact is real and far-reaching. As such, educators should be prepared for thought-provoking questions from students regarding the intricacies of the gangs and mafias (both terms are often used interchangeably).

The following online resources provide further information about gang prevention and awareness: <http://archive.ncpc.org/topics/by-audience/parents/gangs-and-your-child.html> and <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/preventing-gang-involvement>. According to the Violence Prevention Institute, the following factors contribute to the decision to join a gang: 1. Identity 2. Protection 3. Fellowship 4. Intimidation. Remain thoughtful as you engage these issues in class.

Note About Alcoholism

The story mentions that Rocky's dad may suffer from alcoholism. You will want to treat this part of the story with sensitivity as alcoholism is a painful issue for some families and the disease may have personally touched the lives of some of your students. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has more information on alcoholism, how to get help, and more (<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>).

Note About Drug Addiction

The story mentions that Rocky's mom may suffer from drug addiction. You will want to treat this part of the story with sensitivity as drug addiction is a painful issue for some families and the disease may have personally touched the lives of some of your students. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has more information on drug addiction, how to get help, and more (<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>).

Note About School Violence

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), school violence (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/schoolviolence/fastfact.html>) is a subgroup of youth violence (https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/school_violence_fact_sheet-a.pdf), and typically occurs between the ages of 10 and 24. Bullying, fighting, weapon use, electronic aggression, and gang violence are all examples of violent behavior that can also occur as school violence.

The themes in this story must be addressed and handled with deep sensitivity and open mindedness. Below are resources for those who may be affected or who wish to support someone through mental health issues.

Crisis Text Line:

Text HOME to 741741 or visit www.crisistextline.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or visit www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

National Human Trafficking Hotline
1-888-373-7888
<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en>

The Trevor Project:
Text START to 678-678 for Trevor Text or call TrevorLifeline at 1-866-488-7386 or visit www.thetrevorproject.org

Mental Health First Aid:
Visit www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org

If you'd like to help those who may be experiencing a mental health challenge, consider becoming trained in Mental Health First Aid.

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- Ask students to think about their family and what family means to them. How is family important to you? How do you interact with your family members? How do you help and support them? How do they help and support you? What do you do when there is difficulty with your family?
- What do you know about the relationship between South Korea and North Korea?
- What strategies do you use when you're sad or upset? Some of the scenes in this book are difficult to read because they describe painful events and experiences. What can we do to take care of ourselves when something is both important to hear and difficult to hear/read?
- Have you ever been in a difficult situation where you didn't know what to do? Who did you go to for help? What plan did you come up with to tackle the situation? How did this situation make you feel?
- As a hook for readers, consider having students explore the Sonia Patel's website: <https://soniapatel.net/>

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- Talk about the title of the book and the book cover image. Ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?
- Encourage students to stop and jot in their notebooks when they: Learn new information, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or see new words.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- the difficulties of dealing with troubling family dynamics
- the impact of bullying on youth
- the complicated process of forgiveness and self-acceptance
- the vibrant culture and geography of Seoul, South Korea
- what family means to Rocky and how it changes over the course of the story
- how trauma manifests and what support is needed in times of crisis

Encourage students to consider why the author, Sonia Patel, would want to share this story with readers.

VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Content Specific

Ginkgo, totters, makgeolli, haemul pajeon, banchan, kimchi, formaldehyde, supine, obsidian, forceps, taekwondo, dojang, tagada, mirth, reunification, persimmon, lacrimal gland, rhomboids, lotus

Academic

cataracts, ingénue, ethereal, tenet, saunter, contorts, billowy, taut, tousle, coaxing, ricochets, loitering, tenor, untethered, intel, rampage, tendrils, gluttony, detonation, modernity, imbeciles,

meanders, corporal, amble, sullen, oasis, doleful, briny, anguish, serenity, boisterous, verbose, writhe, panorama, despondent, serrated, armistice, desolate, artillery, stoic, stalwartness, amphibious, retaliation, brigade, excrement, intermittent, penance, perpetual, insinuation, thespian, douse, amble, reverie

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What character traits do you learn about Rocky in the first chapter? What is your first impression of him?
2. Where does the story take place? Over what period of time?
3. Who are Rocky's best friends?
4. Where does Rocky consistently find himself at the end of his walks?
5. Describe Rocky's family. Who is his father? Who is his mother? Who are his uncles? What do you learn about each of them early on in the book?
6. What is Rocky's relationship to school?
7. What is the significance of Rocky's handkerchief? Of Rocky's knife?
8. What does TSP stand for? What is Rocky's relationship to TSP at the beginning of the book?
9. Who is Ha-na? What is Rocky's relationship to her at the beginning of the story? How does he treat her and why?
10. What are the first two tenets of TSP?
11. Why is Rocky shocked to learn about his dad's torture techniques?
12. What gift does Rocky's dad surprise him with in chapter 7? How does Rocky feel about his gift?
13. Why doesn't Rocky's dad inform him about TSP activities?
14. When does Rocky first notice his attraction to Ha-na?
15. Why is Rocky not rushing to have his first sexual experience?
16. What motivates Rocky to stop drinking alcohol?

17. How did Older Uncle die?
18. What story causes Rocky to stop bullying Ha-na?
19. When do readers learn that Ha-na has been self-harming?
20. Why do Rocky and his boys go to Nolda Land amusement park?
21. Describe what happens when Rocky first apologizes to Ha-na. How does she respond? How does Rocky feel afterwards?
22. What events led up to Rocky getting punched by his father?
23. Why does Rocky go to Baengnyeong Island?
24. Who does Rocky meet on Baengnyeong Island?
25. Why did Younger Uncle leave TSP? How does he live his life?
26. Describe the relationship between Younger Uncle and Rocky's mother.
27. What happened to Rocky's mother?
28. How do Rocky and Younger Uncle convince Rocky's father to share family secrets?
29. How does Ha-na help Rocky?
30. What happens when Rocky apologizes a second time to Ha-na? How does she respond? How does Rocky feel afterwards?
31. What happens when Rocky tells his father he is leaving to live with Younger Uncle on Baengnyeong Island?
32. Why does Rocky write a letter to Ha-na? What does it say?
33. Why does Ha-na visit Rocky on Bengnyeong Island?
34. How does Rocky feel about Ha-na towards the end of the book?
35. Why is Ha-na leaving South Korea? Where is she going? How does that impact Rocky?
36. What is the significance of Kyung-seok?
37. What do Kyung-seok and Ha-na commit to at the end of the story?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. Describe Rocky as a narrator. Do you find him relatable? Is he a compelling main character? Why or why not?
2. After Rocky's mother leaves, he reflects that his "smile stayed inside" (32). What does it mean that his smile stayed inside? How is that represented in the book and does it change over time?
3. How does the setting of Seoul impact the story and the characters' development?

4. Sharing a meal often brings people together. Choose scenes from *Bloody Seoul* where food is central to the conversation or story development. How does Rocky's relationship to food help frame the book?
5. What role does the Han River play in the story? What role has the Han River played throughout history?
6. Rocky often reflects on the idea that family is one of nature's masterpieces. What does this quote mean to you?
7. What characteristics would you use to describe Ha-na? What antagonisms does she have to deal with because she is of Indian descent?
8. Describe Rocky's relationship to his mother throughout the story. Why does he compare his mother to Ha-na? Are there similarities between Rocky's mother and Ha-na?
9. How does Rocky's family dynamic impact his mental health?
10. A chosen family is made of people who are not necessarily related biologically, but have intentionally chosen to embrace, support, love and nurture one another.
11. How does the idea of a chosen family show up in this story? Do you have chosen family? How do you all love and support each other?
12. How do colorism and prejudice intersect in this story? Connect this to real-world current events and community issues, nationally or locally.
13. What is the significance of names in the story? What does your name mean? Have you ever wanted to choose a different name for yourself? Why or why not?
14. How can music play an important role towards healing?
15. Why do you think Ha-na forgives Rocky? What do you learn about forgiveness from this story? What different kinds of forgiveness are represented?
16. What do you learn about trauma from this story? What different kinds of traumas are represented?
17. What makes the friendship between Rocky and his boys so strong?
18. Why do you think Ricky's mother still loves Rocky's father, despite the abuse she endured? What are some reasons people stay in relationships that may not be healthy for them?
19. All the men in Rocky's family have tattoos. What do the tattoos signify for each of them? Why are tattoos significant for some people?
20. How would you describe Rocky and Ha-na's relationship throughout the story? Did anything surprise you about their relationship? Do you think Ha-na is romantically interested in Rocky? Why or why not?
21. Read aloud this quote: "being honest is not about predicting or controlling the other person's reaction. It's about being your true self. It's about being your true self. It's about being truthful in your deeds and word" (p258). When Younger Uncle says this to Rocky what does he mean?

Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

22. How would you define bullying? What are some examples of bullying? What effect does bullying have on the person being bullied? On others? What should you do if you're being bullied? How might others help when a person is being bullied?
23. How did you feel about the way *Bloody Seoul* ended? Were you satisfied with the ending? Why or why not?

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. **Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion.** You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What do you think the author's message to the reader is? What do you think Sonia Patel wanted to tell readers?
2. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What is your role in your own family? What are ways you express yourself after an emotional event?
3. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *Bloody Seoul*? Why did you make those connections?
4. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world or on the news? Why did *Bloody Seoul* make you think of that?
5. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? Think about different character changes, the setting, and the relationships. What did you learn from reading *Bloody Seoul*?
6. Prejudice results in the mistreatment and isolation of people based on preconceived ideas and beliefs. Have you or someone you know ever been treated differently based on something they had no control over? How did you feel experiencing this or witnessing it? How did you react? What can we do to confront this kind of prejudice?

Multilingual Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are Multilingual Learners (ML).

1. Assign ML students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Have students give a short talk about what family means to them, and how they or their family

have overcome obstacles in their life.

4. Have students illustrate or discuss a loss and/or major change they have experienced and had to deal with.
5. What real-life people or events are you reminded of by characters or events in the story? Prepare a short essay, citing examples from the book and your chosen character/event to justify the similarities.
6. Additional resources to support multilingual students: <https://www.multilinguallearningtoolkit.org/>.

Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. Rocky feels abandoned by his mother. Have you ever been abandoned or lost someone you love? What is the difference between abandonment and loss? Why do some people become reserved and emotionally closed off during times of sadness or trauma? What causes this retreat?
2. There are many stories of family in *Bloody Seoul*. How does the book show the difference between healthy family dynamics and abusive family dynamics? What are the characteristics of a healthy family? What are the different ways people show respect and care for one another in healthy families? What are the characteristics of an abusive family? Who can help if someone is experiencing abuse? Students can brainstorm ideas on chart paper that can be presented and accessible for the whole class. Alternatively, students can create a word cloud and see what characteristics come up the most and are the largest (<https://www.wordclouds.com/>).
3. Coping mechanisms are the strategies people often use in the face of stress and/or trauma to help manage painful or difficult emotions. Coping mechanisms can help people adjust to stressful events while helping them maintain their emotional well-being. Some coping mechanisms can be harmful, others helpful. What coping mechanism does Rocky and other characters in the text use to manage their difficult feelings and circumstances? What are your coping mechanisms? How do you distinguish between a healthy coping mechanism and an unhealthy one?

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Assign students in groups for an in-depth character study analyzing Rocky.** Have the groups and/or partnerships brainstorm about a guiding question: What and how can this character teach us? Have students share their findings: What lessons did this character teach us over the course of the story? How did his actions develop the narrative, and why are they crucial to understanding the meaning of the book? Students can present their findings to the class.
- **Examine the different literary elements that author Sonia Patel uses throughout *Bloody Seoul*.** Have students come up with a list and select portions of the text that showcase a specific literary device (i.e. foreshadowing, flashback, metaphor, etc). Afterward, students can select one literary device and write about how that was impactful when reading *Bloody Seoul*. How do literary devices make the story engaging, and how do they contribute to the story overall? See PBS's Literary Elements and Techniques video for more information about how to teach about literary devices (<https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/litel18-fig/literary-elements-and-techniques-figurative-language/>).
- **Select a scene in which you disagreed how a character handled a situation, person, or event.** In the voice of that character, rewrite the scene as you think it should have happened.
- **Write a book review for *Bloody Seoul*.** Explain what the story is about and how you felt about the characters and events in the book as well as how the story was told. If you would recommend the book to others, give reasons for your recommendation.
- **Has there ever been a time you experienced or witnessed abuse or injustice?** How did it make you feel? How did it affect you? Which adult or peer did you trust in your life to talk about this with? In a personal essay reflect on your own relationship with abuse, harm, and discrimination.
- **Challenge students to explore the characters more deeply with writing tasks that require perspective-taking.** Choose a scene from *Bloody Seoul* and re-tell it from Ha-na's perspective.
- **Envision a sequel to *Bloody Seoul* and have students title the second book.** What do they think it would be called? Write a synopsis.

- **Create your own guide for teaching this book.** What grade would you teach this book to? What themes would you highlight? What activities would you create for students? What other books would you pair *Bloody Seoul* with?
- **Have students imagine they have the opportunity to interview Sonia Patel.** Design interview questions they would ask Patel if they were on a talk show, news show, or radio show. What do you want to learn more about in terms of the writing process, character development, or the genre of YA fiction?

Social Studies & Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3; Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9; and Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3; Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6; Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9; and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, and Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Design a lesson or unit on South Korea.** Detail the history of South Korea and its relationship to North Korea. Ohio State University's East Asian Studies Center has lesson plans designed for Korean culture, geography, and more (<https://easc.osu.edu/resources/k-16/instructionalmaterials/lesson-plans/korea-lesson-plans-k-12-korea-workshop>). The Weatherhead East Asian Institute of Columbia University's Asia for Educators also has additional resources on geography and learning about Korea (<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/elementary/korea/index.html>).
- **Blood Seoul touches upon colorism and discrimination as evidenced using the pejorative term "coolie".** Conduct and present research detailing the labor conditions of Indians during British colonial rule. Include discussions of indentured servitude and enslavement, and other ethnic and/or racial groups impacted by this history.
- **Have students create a map of Seoul and map the places Rocky mentions throughout the book.** Consider South Korea's geography and its relationship to North Korea. Additionally, students can research other cities in South Korea.

Arts/Performing Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Listen to some of the Luciano Pavarotti songs that Rocky and Ha-na enjoy throughout the story ("Una furtiva lagrima," "Caruso," "Torna a Surriento", etc).** Discuss which songs (if any) that you enjoy and why? What emotions are present when you listen to Pavarotti? What stands out?
- **Create a playlist for someone you care deeply for (i.e family member, friend, partner, loved one).** Have students share playlists with each other. Additionally, play some of the songs in class.

- **After creating your own synopsis for a sequel to *Bloody Seoul* create a cover for the book.** What kind of materials do they want to use for the cover? Encourage students to consider what they think will happen in the second book, and how that reflects the artwork for the cover. How can they use the current cover to inspire their work?
- **Create a campaign that outlines the risks of one of the following issues: cigarette smoking, bullying, and domestic violence.** Design posters and advertisements to support your campaign.
- **Imagine that Ha-na also had a tattoo.** What would it be and why? Where would it be? Use evidence from the book to support your idea and design a tattoo for Ha-na. Share with the class.

School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Use a device that has videotaping capabilities to create a book trailer for *Bloody Seoul*.** Consult ReadWriteThink's lesson plan about book trailers for more resources and information (<https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/book-report-alternative-creating-c>).
- **Ha-na creates a striking self-portrait that represents all she has been through and the possibilities of the future.** Create a portrait of yourself through drawing, collage, or photograph. In writing, describe what actions and qualities you admire about yourself. You can also give yourself special abilities and powers. Write in prose or submit a poem or song.
- **Cook a meal, with adult supervision, and share it with your loved ones.** Explain why you chose this meal and your relationship to the recipe and ingredients. Journal about this experience afterwards.



Ordering Information

General Order Information:

leeandlow.com/contact/ordering

Secure Online Ordering:

leeandlow.com/books/bloody-seoul

By Phone: 212-779-4400 ext. 25

By Fax: 212-683-1894

By Mail:

Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Avenue,
New York, NY 10016

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sonia Patel knows teenagers inside and out. As a child and adolescent psychiatrist, trained at Stanford University and the University of Hawaii, she has spent over fifteen years listening to and understanding the psyche of teenagers from all walks of life. She's also been a teenage girl herself, growing up on Moloka'i as a first generation Gujarati-American. As a writer, Sonia is passionate about giving voice to the underrepresented youth she treats. Her YA debut featuring a Gujarati-Indian American teen, *Rani Patel In Full Effect*, was a finalist for the Morris Award and was listed on YALSA's Best Fiction for Young Adults and *Kirkus' Reviews* Best Teen Books of 2016. Her second YA novel, with a Gujarati-Indian trans boy and a mixed ethnicity girl, *Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story*, was selected for the 2019 In the Margins Book Award Recommended Fiction Book List. She chose South Korea as the setting for her third YA novel, *Bloody Seoul*, because of her extensive treatment experience with Korean and Korean American teens on Oahu (and her love for the Korean gangster film genre).

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