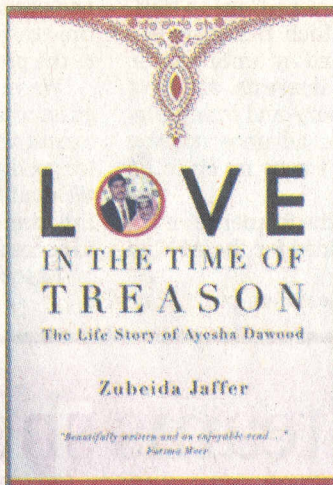


Homespun historical fiction at its very best

I WAS immediately absorbed by this beautiful, intriguing, tragic piece of historical fiction. Zubeida Jaffer has woven an incredible tale in *Love in the Time of Treason* (Kwela), which spans more than 40 years and is set in South Africa and India.

She tracks the journey of Ayesha Dawood, a young political activist who spends her life organising political meetings, agitating for change and accompanying the security police to the latest in a long line of prison cells. Her parents worry, but are supportive of Ayesha's passionate desire to change South Africa.

On another continent, Yusuf Mukadam enjoys an uncomplicated, relatively happy life in a small Indian village. It's only when a feisty young woman from South Africa visits the neighbouring village to spend some time with her paternal grandmother that Yusuf begins



to consider bigger things: a new life, a new country and the meaning of love.

Jaffer skilfully weaves these characters' different narratives into one gorgeous cloth, and in just over 200 pages you cannot help but engage with brave Ayesha, loyal Yusuf and their

families – as well as the important political figures they meet along the way.

The novel begins and ends with a 1997 visit by Nelson Mandela to Ayesha's hometown, Worcester.

Ayesha and Mandela met during the Treason Trial in the 1950s, and throughout her exile in India she never forgets the tall, dignified man who stood alongside her and many others to fight for what he believed in.

In less capable hands, *Love in the Time of Treason* would be a smarmy love story with a bit of politics thrown in for good measure. But Jaffer is a gifted writer, and this book stole my heart from the first paragraph and held on tight until page 220.

– *Natasha Joseph*

● *Love in the Time of Treason* has been selected by Exclusive Books as one of 30 Homebru titles celebrating South African writing.