



The

Tattooed Fakir

B I M A N N A T H

Northern Bengal; late eighteenth century. The new colonial rulers face an unlikely army of fakirs and sannyasis. At the same time, a few indigo plantations have come up in the countryside. The French keep a low profile, and even indulge in indigo trade espionage.

A young woman – Roshanara – is kidnapped by the village zamindar. The British sahib, owner of the indigo plantation, intervenes, but then takes her as his own mistress. She is not, however, any local woman – she is a fakir's daughter.

Her fakir father and her husband Asif go to Majnu Shah's band of fakirs to plead for help in getting her back. Asif feels nothing is left for him in the village and joins the fakirs, training in the use of weapons and ammunition, skirmishing with them up and down the country, but pining, always, for his Roshanara.

Years later, in an oddly fated rescue mission he ends up, not with her, but with her son – Roshan – who evolves into a ferocious fakir soldier, tattooed and insecure about his identity.

A spare, elegant rendition of an era from the margins of history, *The Tattooed Fakir* underlines helplessness and rage, of the powerful and the powerless alike.

FICTION

www.panmacmillan.co.in

ISBN 978-1-447-22285-9



₹299

Jacket illustration and design:
Ajanta Guhathakurta Das