Naresh Veeran (1974 - ) is the best-selling author of the crime thriller, *31 Million Reasons*, which was published in late 2007. The novel was inspired by a heist that took place in 1997, during which R31 million was stolen at night from a cash holding facility in Durban.

*31 Million Reasons* was met with a positive reception upon release. Thomas Blom Hansen described it as a “racy” and “fast-paced” novel that captured “the style and the local [Durban] tongue with great precision.” (1) It was also highly recommended by Sharen Thumboo for the way it captured the “local accents and lingo” of Chatsworth (2) while an artSMart review appreciated the pacing of the novel, its fleshed out characters and humour (3).

Rogue Star Films – a Cape Town-based production house – optioned the film rights in March 2008 and went on to produce and later release the picture via Nu Metro. The film premiered at the Durban International Film Festival in 2011. According to the 2012 Box Office Report released by the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF), it became one of the highest-grossing local releases of the year. Veeran also produced and directed *For Better For Worse*, a romcom which was distributed by Videovision and released in 2010 through the Ster Kinekor cinema network.

A graduate of the NFVF’s Master’s screen-writing programme, Veeran began his career as a freelance journalist before joining the South African Broadcasting Corporation’s Radio Division. After almost four years with the public broadcaster, he relocated to Cape Town where he headed Old Mutual’s in-house media/communications arm before joining Media 24 back in his hometown of Durban.
Veeren has written a series of print articles and contributes to anthologies and academic compilations. In 2013 two articles detailing his memories of Chatsworth were included in the Ashwin Desai/Goolam Vahed compilation, Chatsworth: The Making of a South African Township. His second novel, Lynwood Hall, was completed at the end of 2013 and is due for release in mid-2015.

Veeren holds a Master's degree (cum laude), a PhD in Human Sciences and post-graduate business management qualifications from the University of Natal. He freelances as a Marketing Consultant and continues to work out of his home on South Africa's East Coast.

Sources


The neighbourhood in which the Coopersamys lived was close knit and colourful, not unlike those inhabited by minority communities throughout the world. Although the busy city of Durban, with its sub-tropical climate, was a tourist Mecca with its Golden Mile of beautiful beaches and proximity to the Drakensberg mountain range, much of its beauty was lost to these early immigrants.

The communal nature of living in Clairwood added a rich texture to their dreary world. Everyone knew each other by name and kids from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds played together on the streets. Saturday evenings at 5.15 were reserved for the latest Indian blockbusters at the Rani Bioscope and Sunday mornings were especially vibrant, with all of the homes on Flower Road tuning in simultaneously to the Indian "broadcast" on the radio. The various families also donned their best clothes to either visit relatives or attend weddings in nearby Cato Manor, Sea View or Riverside. In fact, it wasn't unusual for the entire community to come together at least twice monthly to participate in communal celebrations, weddings or prayers.

Bibliography
