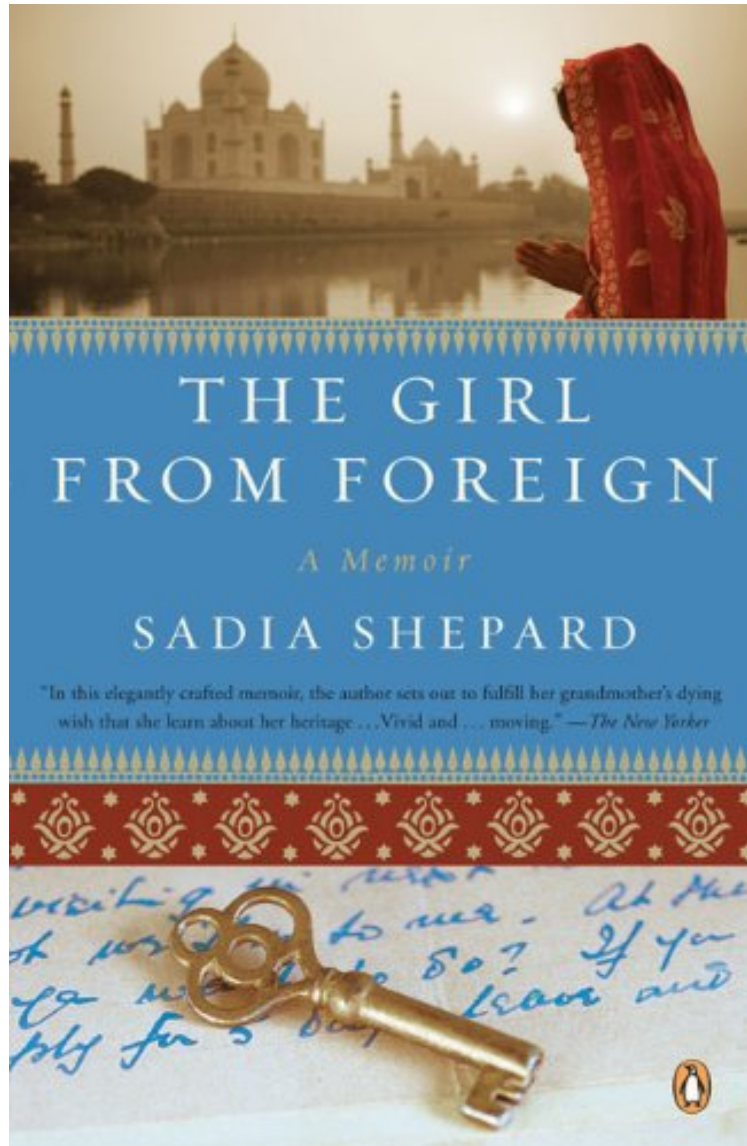


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The Girl from Foreign: A Memoir

Sadia Shepard

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#129403 in Books Sadia Shepard 2009-06-30 2009-06-30 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.46 x .88 x 5.50l, .70 #File Name: 0143115774384 pages The Girl from Foreign | File size: 59.Mb

Sadia Shepard : The Girl from Foreign: A Memoir before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Girl from Foreign: A Memoir:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A great look at multicultural identity By Aliza Hausman I loved this book! I enjoyed reading about the Jewish community in India as well as learning more about the Muslim, Indian, Pakistani cultures. Shepard's physical journey is one of rich backdrops and exotic Indian locales, all which Shepard paints beautifully. A particularly vivid scene of traveling by train in a world where cars are segregated by sex becomes

a haunting look at what it means to be a stranger in a strange land. We ache for the mistakes Shepard makes as an American abroad. Still more exquisite is Shepard's other journey. It is one luxuriously mapped out inner voyage that asks her to question her identity and her place in the world. Her identity is itself another math problem. Before she discovers her Indian Jewish roots, she considers herself: "Half Pakistani, half American. Half Muslim, half Christian. Half-half." But just where does this "half-half," as she calls it, belong? 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended! This book has it all- a compelling family ...By Think again Highly recommended! This book has it all- a compelling family story and insight into a fascinating world with diverse cultures. The author shares her experiences with sensitivity and humor, and she answers the question of choosing a place to call "home," with parallels from both her grandmother's life and her own. I also enjoyed "Interpretation of Maladies", and I agree that this will appeal to fans of that work and subject matter as well. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Traveling to find Yourself By Ruth W. Messinger a fascinating story, more so because it is true, of a young woman's exploration of India and of herself and her family story, the amazing history of how a 20th century family comes to be Christian and Muslim and Jewish when all the layers are peeled back. great imagery of India, important story of the Jews of India--when they came, what they did and where they are now.

A search for shipwrecked ancestors, forgotten histories, and a sense of home Fascinating and intimate , The Girl from Foreign is one woman's search for ancient family secrets that leads to an adventure in far-off lands. Sadia Shepard, the daughter of a white Protestant from Colorado and a Muslim from Pakistan, was shocked to discover that her grandmother was a descendant of the Bene Israel, a tiny Jewish community shipwrecked in India two thousand years ago. After traveling to India to put the pieces of her family's past together, her quest for identity unlocks a myriad of profound religious and cultural revelations that Shepard gracefully weaves into this touching, eye-opening memoir.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Who is Rachel Jacobs? the 13-year-old asks her Muslim grandmother Rahat Siddiqi; that, Nana tells her, was my name before I was married. Thus does a grandmother's stunning reply and a granddaughter's promise to learn about her ancestors set Shepard's three voyages of discovery in motion: her grandmother's history; the story of the Bene Israel (one of the lost tribes of Israel that, having sailed from Israel two millennia ago, crashed on the Konkan coast in India; and her own self-discovery (her mother was Muslim, her father Christian, and her grandmother Jewish). Shepard balances all three journeys with dexterity as she spends her Fulbright year, with an old hand-drawn map and her grandmother's family tree, unraveling the mysteries of Nana's past while visiting and photographing the grand and minuscule synagogues in Bombay and on the Konkan Coast. A filmmaker, Shepard writes with a lively sense of pacing (her year proceeds chronologically, interspersed with well-placed flashbacks) and a keen sense of character (getting to know her friend, escort and fellow filmmaker Rekhev as gradually as she does, or capturing the Muslim baker who makes the only authentic challah in Bombay in a few strokes). Shepard's story is entertaining and instructive, inquiring and visionary. (Aug.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From The New Yorker September 8, 2008 In this elegantly crafted memoir, the author sets out to fulfill her grandmother's dying wish that she learn about her heritage. Her grandmother grew up among the Bene Israel, a small Jewish community in India; when she married a Muslim, she left Judaism and, eventually, India, and adopted the name Rahat Siddiqi. Shepard herself is the product of a mixed marriage: her mother is Pakistani and Muslim, her father American and Christian. After receiving a Fulbright, she left her life in the U.S. to document the remaining Indian Jews, whose numbers have steadily dwindled as many emigrate to Israel. Shepard's eagerness to maintain narrative tension leads to occasional artificiality, but her writing is vivid and her meditations on heritage and grief are moving. Copyright 2008 Click here to subscribe to The New Yorker From Booklist * Starred * Shepard's mother, Samina, a Muslim Pakistani, and father, Richard, a Christian American, gave her the freedom to embrace both religions and cultures during her childhood outside of Boston. Shepard's third parent was her adored maternal grandmother, Rahat Siddiqi, called Nana. At age 13, Shepard was shocked to discover that Nana was once Rachel Jacobs, a member of the Bene Israel, a small Jewish community near the Konkan coast of India. Years later, Shepard, now a filmmaker, promises Nana that she will return to India to document her history and that of the Bene Israel, whose descendants believe they are a lost tribe of Israel. With the aid of a Fulbright, she arrives in Bombay shortly after the events of 9/11. Shepard entwines narrative flashbacks of her family's history with a chronicle of her time abroad, as she interacts with a colorful array of individuals, seeks out the Bene Israel's synagogues and diminishing communities, and reflects upon her sense of self and home, given her complex heritage. Shepard's engaging and pensive memoir of discovery offers a moving portrait of her grandmother within an inquisitive, complex journey into urgent questions of religious, cultural, and personal identity. --Leah Strauss