



Sutra and Other Stories

By Simin Daneshvar

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Here are six stories by one of Iran's greatest contemporary writers, rare and intimate glimpses into the lives of ordinary Iranian men and women; windows into the Persian soul. From the delicately painted tragedy of Mehrangiz in *A City Like Paradise* to the wry comedy of Anis, from two sisters' surreal nocturne in *Childbirth* to a village boy's broken dreams in *Potshards*, from a young woman torn between duty and passion in *Bibi Shahrbanu* to the brilliant and numinous *Sutra*, each story is told with the detail, clarity of vision, and deeply human compassion characteristic of Daneshvar's finest work. Daneshvar's Iran is a landscape in which the medieval and the modern coexist uneasily. Against this backdrop, the author explores the persistent themes of her nearly five decades as a writer: themes of sexual and racial identity, the social relations of wealth and poverty, the workings of memory and dreams. The lives of her characters—here, some of her most subtly realized—are determined by conditions and norms over which they have little or no control; still, in the end, *Sutra* offers a vision of hope. These stories are a major addition to Daneshvar's works in translation, *Daneshvar's Playhouse* and *Savushun*.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

These six vibrant stories by Iranian novelist Daneshvar (Savushun) chronicle the vicissitudes of life—its horror, unfairness, humor and fleeting beauty. There is the domestic tragedy of "A City Like Paradise," which tells of a black servant cudgeled and thrown out by her employer, who is jealous of her bonds with household members; the tart comedy of "Anis," about a woman who, as she shuttles from one husband to the next, swings from subservience to fervid religiosity to urbane sophistication; the social commentary of "Potshards," describing a patronizing, elderly white woman's impromptu attempt to adopt a village orphan. Born in 1921, Daneshvar portrays a world full of injustices and cruel surprises redeemed by hope and acts of kindness, such as a midwife's clandestine visit to save the life of an ungrateful pregnant woman ("Childbirth"). In the exuberant, virtuoso title story, a sea captain born in Madras, shipwrecked off Africa, recalls his smuggling exploits, his life in the Persian Gulf and the wife and daughter he forced into prostitution and then abandoned; half-delirious, he undergoes an exorcism to free himself of possession by a mermaid and then dictates his vision of a world free from tyranny and sorrow.

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Review

A veritable tour de force fusion of actuality, fantasy, and mystical transport....Reveals Daneshvar at her most gifted, as an innovative writer of the highest order in the long history of Persian literature. *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* --International Journal of Middle East Studies

These six vibrant stories chronicle the vicissitudes of life—its horror, unfairness, humor and fleeting beauty....Daneshvar portrays a world full of injustices and cruel surprises redeemed by hope and acts of kindness. *Publishers Weekly* --Publishers Weekly

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: Persian

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rachel Robertson:

Information is provisions for folks to get better life, information today can get by anyone in everywhere. The information can be a knowledge or any news even restricted. What people must be consider while those information which is inside former life are challenging be find than now could be taking seriously which one works to believe or which one the actual resource are convinced. If you have the unstable resource then you have it as your main information there will be huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen inside you if you take Sutra and Other Stories as your daily resource information.

Michael Brown:

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Ariane Swanson:

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Lee Witherspoon:

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