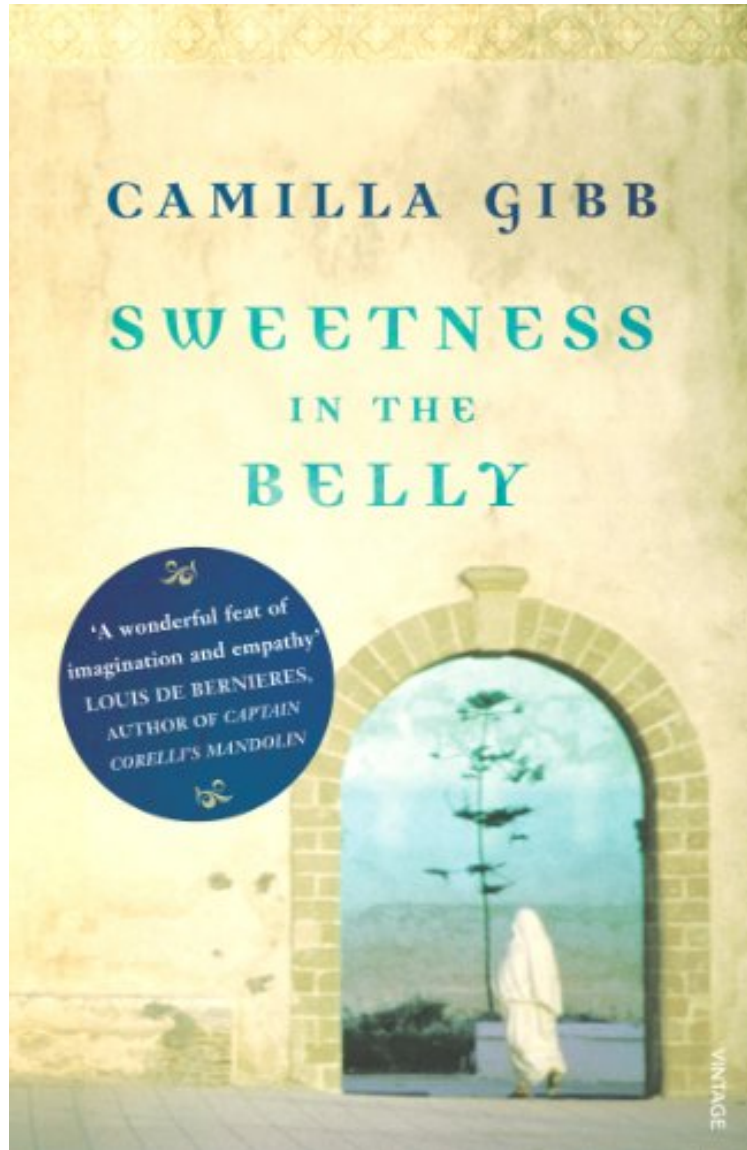


[Download pdf ebook] Sweetness In The Belly

Sweetness In The Belly

Von Camilla Gibb

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Von Camilla Gibb : Sweetness In The Belly before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sweetness In The Belly:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Between culturesVon Friederike KnabeSweetness in the Belly is the moving and heart-warming story of Lilly Abdal, told in her own words, adding to it a special liveliness, directness and authenticity. Camilla Gibb has succeeded in creating a rich and detailed account of the life of a young woman caught between cultures and identities. Her narrative alternates

between periods during the four dramatic years in Ethiopia and those during ten years in London, after leaving Ethiopia in 1974, at the end of Emperor Haile Selassie's reign. Gibb's novel is fast moving and particularly compelling in its portrayal of Lilly's life in the holy city of Harar. At the same time, she is conveying in-depth insights into the respective realities there and in England and establishes the religious and cultural context that surround the heroine with great subtlety and credibility. Lilly, born in England but, after the murder of her peripatetic parents in Morocco, remains there and is raised at a Muslim shrine by the Great Abdal, a Sufi teacher, to become a devout Muslim. She is eight years old. When forced to leave Morocco at the age of sixteen due to political upheavals, she embarks on a pilgrimage across the Sahara desert to the ancient holy city of Harar in Ethiopia. Not being accepted as a white girl in the household of the local sheikh, she is sent off to live with a poor cousin of one of his wives. Nouria, single mother of four, subsists in a shack in a deprived part of town. Gibb evokes the sounds and smells of the place, creating an authentic portrait of the harsh life of its inhabitants. Nouria and the neighbours start off being hostile of this "farenji" who knows the Qur'an better than they do. It takes Lilly considerable time and effort to be accepted. Seeking to belong where she can feel emotionally and physically safe, she immerses herself completely in their world and accepts the customs of her surroundings. Through Lilly's eyes the reader is introduced to a culture, rich in tradition and rituals. Not all of them are acceptable to Lilly, given her Sufi upbringing and she argues against them. Political developments in Ethiopia and a new circle of friends also challenge her traditional beliefs and behaviour. When she develops romantic feelings for the young attractive doctor she has to chart out her own way. Alternating with accounts of her time in Harar, as she grows into an adult (1970-1974), Lilly narrates her life in London, beginning fifteen years after leaving Ethiopia. Now working as a nurse and living in a poor housing estate, she remains an outsider who does not fit into British reality. Committed to preserve her religion and her Ethiopian culture, she befriends Amina, her Ethiopian refugee neighbour and creates an oasis of "home" around them. While Amina and her family adjust more and more to the western lifestyle, Lilly clings to the memories of her previous life and the people in it. But developments force her to reassess and look into the future rather than hanging on to the past. Will she be able to do it? Gibb's rendering of the East African refugee scene is as realistic as her portrayal of conditions in Harar. Her novel is grounded and enriched by her thorough research and personal experiences with the cultures and the places she evokes. Ethiopians went through famine and deprivations during the early 1970s, a time that ended in the uprising against and eventual removal of the Emperor. Gibb brings this context into the novel without overburdening the reader. She finds a convincing balance between the personal and the general keeping the book a page turner from beginning to end. [Friederike Knabe]

Kurzbeschreibung A richly imagined tale of one woman's search for love and belonging. In Thatcher's London, Lilly, a white Muslim nurse, struggles in a state of invisible exile. As Ethiopian refugees gradually fill the flats of the housing estate where she lives, Lilly tentatively begins to share with them her longing for the home she herself once had in Africa and her heartbreaking search for her missing lover. Back in Haile Selassie's Ethiopia, the young Lilly, born in the 1950s to British parents, now orphaned and full of religious conviction, finds herself living in the city of Harar. She is drawn to the idealistic young doctor, Aziz, himself an outsider in the community. But then convulsions of a new revolutionary order separate them, sending Lilly to an England she has never seen, while Aziz disappears. From Publishers Weekly With sure-handed, urgent prose, Gibb (*The Petty Details of So-and-So's Life*) chronicles the remarkable spiritual and geographical journey of a white British Muslim woman who struggles with cultural contradictions to find community and love. Lilly Abdal, orphaned at age eight after the murder of her hippie British parents, grows up at an Islamic shrine in Morocco. The narrative alternates between Harar, Ethiopia, in the 1970s, where she moved in pilgrimage at age 16, and London, England, in the '80s, where she lives in exile from Africa, working as a nurse. Ignoring the cries of "farenji," or foreigner, she starts a religious Muslim school in Harar. Later, in London, along with her friend Amina, Lilly runs a community association for family reunification of Ethiopian refugees. Each month, she reads the list of people who've escaped famine and the brutal Dergue regime, hoping to find Dr. Aziz Abdunnasser, her half-Sudanese lover who chose Africa over their relationship. Despite some predictability of plot, the novel fluently speaks the "languages of religion and exile," depicting both the multifaceted heartbreak of those lucky enough to escape violent regime changes and the beauty of unlikely bonds created by the modern multicultural world. (Mar. 20) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Lilly, a young white Muslim woman, is eight when her British parents are killed in Morocco, and she is placed in the care of a Muslim disciple, who fills her days with the teachings of Islam. She later moves to Ethiopia, where she becomes a nurse, teaches local girls to recite the Qur'an, and falls in love with Aziz, a medical student who supports the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie. Lilly's tenuous ties to the monarchy force her to flee to London when Selassie is deposed, in 1974; there she immerses herself in a refugee support group and waits to be reunited with Aziz. Gibb adroitly flips back and forth between prerevolution Ethiopia, where Lilly, though a foreigner, is admired for her knowledge of Muslim teachings, and London in the 1990s, where she feels stronger ties to Muslim

refugees than to the British, who feel increasingly threatened by the refugees' presence. Gibbs' novel is a gripping and provocative addition to the post-9/11 genre of fiction exploring the many facets of Islam. Deborah Donovan Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved