



A Pair of Jeans and other stories

Qaisra Shahraz

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In this vibrant and moving collection of short stories by award winning author Qaisra Shahraz, she demonstrates yet again her abilities for storyline and plot which are always gripping. The Elopement, The Discovery and A Pair of Jeans focus on the issues facing young Pakistani Muslim women as they work out how to live in a world where traditional and Western values clash. Can they create a synthesis? Miriam in A Pair of Jeans discovers that a seeming innocuous item of clothing can cause disaster while Rubiya in The Elopement and The Discovery pays the price of rejection for her past misdeed. In The Zemindar's Wife and Perchanvah the reader opens a window into a world of feudal lifestyle and class consciousness that is embedded in the psyche of many of the country's inhabitants. Other stories - Escape and The City Dwellers explore the feelings of those struggling to discover the meaning of "home". The Malay Host is a contrast with an element of the mysterious. What is behind the one locked door in the old Malay house that is a tourist attraction and why is the woman of the house brandishing a piece of burning wood at the Western visitors? Long held cultural and traditional attitudes to clothes and other aspects of life in general is a dilemma for young women and their families caught up in the midst of an identity crisis. In some ways a lot has changed in British Pakistani society but this fundamental dilemma is still there and well depicted in the lives of the protagonists in these stories.

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