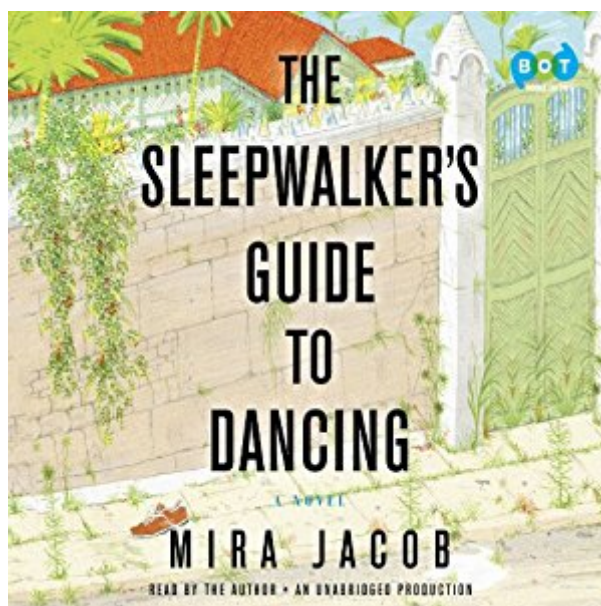


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The Sleepwalker's Guide To Dancing: A Novel



Synopsis

For fans of J. Courtney Sullivan, Meg Wolitzer, Mona Simpson, and Jhumpa Lahiri comes a winning, irreverent debut novel about a family wrestling with its future and its past. With depth, heart, and agility, debut novelist Mira Jacob takes us on a deftly plotted journey that ranges from 1970s India to suburban 1980s New Mexico to Seattle during the dot.com boom. *The Sleepwalker's Guide to Dancing* is an epic, irreverent testimony to the bonds of love, the pull of hope, and the power of making peace with life's uncertainties. Celebrated brain surgeon Thomas Eapen has been sitting on his porch, talking to dead relatives. At least that is the story his wife, Kamala, prone to exaggeration, tells their daughter, Amina, a photographer living in Seattle. Reluctantly, Amina returns home and finds a situation that is far more complicated than her mother let on, with roots in a trip the family, including Amina's rebellious brother Akhil, took to India 20 years earlier. Confronted by Thomas's unwillingness to explain himself, strange looks from the hospital staff, and a series of puzzling items buried in her mother's garden, Amina soon realizes that the only way she can help her father is by coming to terms with her family's painful past. In doing so, she must reckon with the ghosts that haunt all of the Eapens.

Book Information

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in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Family Life

Customer Reviews

This book was phenomenal. If you are looking for a beautiful story filled with love, grief, loss, coming of age, tragedy, humor, history, romance and all the powerful emotions that haunt every family, Mira Jacob's "The Sleepwalkers Guide to Dancing" is just what you are looking for. Don't let the length

steer you away, it is a quick read and filled with amazing dialogue. Aspects of every character will remind you of someone in your life and the story will consume you. This is not just a story of an immigrant family, it is a story that anyone can relate to. I loved how the story line jumped around and changed location and time every chapter. Jacob reveals important pieces of each character's story in a masterfully choreographed dance. The audio book is read by the author herself and is really great too! Plan to stay up late every night until you finish...because you will not be able to put it down. You will also crave Indian food the entire time you're reading! A great choice for a book club too!

The journey begins in India and unfolds in the American southwest. Already, that's intriguing and begs the question, why leave behind a family estate and promising career. The use of alternating time sequences to develop the characters was brilliant, giving small glimpses of past and future events that ultimately explain the sacrifice, devotion, anger and dissatisfaction of the people closest to Amina, the central character. The narrative that develops through her is tangible. So much so, you can almost smell the Indian cooking described in nearly every chapter of the book. I came to love the Eapens and their extended family and the way they celebrated, cooked, danced, and cared for one another. I never laughed and cried so much, but what makes the story compelling is the writing. A beautiful story, artfully done.

I didn't know anything about this book, but it was selected for our February discussion. What an amazing book! I couldn't put it down. One word to describe the book - LOVE. It showcases the love of family, however one chooses to define family -- immediate and extended family. It highlights that love is tangible and intangible -- the love received daily in whatever way that love may be expressed from those living, as well as the love and dedication to those no longer with us. It discusses the evolution of love -- be it a gradual falling in love, arranged marriage which leads to love, love at first sight, love as a desire and the undying love for a child and/or sibling. Love is passion -- for people, places and things (such as photography). Love can be real or imagined. However, if you choose to accept it, LOVE exists in so many ways.

Wonderful cultural fusions, beautifully - and funnily - expressed sentiments and unique perspectives and experiences, terrific matchings-up of elements (Rob Halford!), occurrences (insomnambulepsy) and events (then-and-now) -- interspersed with the divine*(you've got to love a good, long novel ;)

This story resonated on a personal level--but even so, it will appeal to all readers looking for an honest, well-written book. This is a book for all of humanity, not simply a response to American immigration. These every-day characters will speak to you in times of trouble or sorrow.

A truly excellent novel. Deeply moving; offering insight into a first generation immigrant family who while financially successful and whose patriarch is respected in the community, struggle to find their place. Their family dynamics and tragedies are heartbreaking and real.

This book was captivating from start to finish. The story jumps from one time period to another, always revealing just enough to make you want more. Following the lives of a family of Indian immigrants, this story explores familial dynamics, drama and life struggles in a way that everyone can relate to. Each character has their own flaws, and the reader gets to witness their personal growth in a way that makes you sympathetic to the struggles of each. I would highly recommend this book!

Although this book has a young adult feel, it is young adult dealing with serious family matters. I wish there had been more depth in the background of family in India, of the parents meeting and marrying, of how the current situation developed, but the book handled the dad's cancer with frankness and compassion, and the resonant death of the main character's brother with understanding and even some resolution. I personally loved the expat and immigrant aspects, the cross-cultural perceptions, the see-ourselves-as-others-see-us opportunities, and I cracked up each time the Mom mangled an idiom. It was a fun read, an interesting read and it could have been more.

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