

Samira and Samir

Siba Shakib

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Samira and Samir Siba Shakib

This is a story of love and courage, and of a remarkable woman who finds her own path in life. When the young girl, Samira, is born, her father - a brave commander fighting in the mountainous land of Afghanistan - decides to bring her up as a boy known as Samir. Soon the fact that Samir is really a girl has been forgotten. Samir learns to fight, ride and shoot, and when her father is killed, she becomes head of the family. However, as an adult, Samir's love for the friend of her youth forces her to confess the truth. She wants to live as Bashir's wife but in return she must reveal her female identity and, in so doing, give up her freedom. Samira follows her heart but she hates wearing the veil. Eventually the torment is too great and Samira realises there has to be a third way for her - the way of a self-confident woman who bravely takes charge of her own life/

Samira and Samir Details

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Author : Siba Shakib

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From Reader Review Samira and Samir for online ebook

Helma says

Great Novel!!! Great Story!!

seorang anak Manusia yang dilahirkan ke dunia sebagai seorang wanita, tetapi sang ayah mengubahnya menjadi seorang laki-laki sejati,.. Samira dan Samir,.. satu pribadi yang sungguh sangat menarik!!!
kita sebagai manusia dapat menjadi apa saja sesuai dengan keinginan kita hanya dengan membiasakan diri kita untuk berusaha dan bersungguh-sungguh dalam menggapai apa yang kita inginkan!!
Samira dan Samir memberikan wacana sendiri tentang kehidupan rakyat Afganistan,..
akhir cerita jadilah anak manusia ini menjadi seorang Samira,. sang wanita sejati,...

Sana'a Abdul latheef says

An outstanding story about a girl who was brought up as a boy in Afghanistan. It's very uniquely written and there is no sugar coating anywhere in the story, rather completely realistic. It visualizes the trauma faced by the girl and the difficult decisions she has to undertake in her life as a boy-girl. There is this tension going on between the boy and girl in her head, and she is confused about how to move on with her life. At a very young age, she witnesses all sorts of cruelties in the adult's world, but little she understand who 'she' or 'he' is, because of the way she was raised. It's a tedious journey to find her real self and future that is portrayed in the story.

Nadi says

A sad yet amazing and also true story of a brave Woman in Afghanistan. Another story that gives you the courage to be who you want to be. A girl's struggles trying to know herself, her goals, and fulfill her parents and her society's wishes. The story shows you that nothing is impossible, and **YOU** are in charge of your life, no matter what. As it says in the book:

"Be afraid of only one thing. Of not living your life"

"As long as we live we have the strength to make whatever we want from our life."

Amene says

[illegible]

Mita says

This book pretty much gave us the picture about how patriarchy culture have developed even in a very small community n' very personally...

Love the personal struggle n' decision that Samira trough. Also love about revealing her gender and her identity crisis...

...Samir (Samira), yang kelahirannya tidak diharapkan karena berkelamin perempuan, dipaksa, dididik dan tumbuh menjadi seorang pria oleh ayahnya yang seorang pimpinan pasukan perang di sebuah desa di kaki gunung. Ibunya hidup dalam depresi berat selama tahunan, dan akhirnya meninggal dalam kesedihannya sendiri.

Meski tidak pernah mengalami siksaan fisik dan psikis dari ayah dan lingkungannya, namun akhirnya Samir(Samira) menyadari ada yang salah dengan dirinya, tubuhnya berbeda dengan kawan2 sepermainannya (yang semuanya adalah pria), ia mengalami 'gender shock' ketika menyadari bahwa sesungguhnya dirinya adalah perempuan. Melalui pertentangan2 batin yang berkecamuk dan permasalahan2 kultural serta agama, akhirnya Samira memutuskan untuk membebaskan dirinya, mengambil keputusan untuk meninggalkan semua yang menekannya dan menjadi perempuan yang merdeka...

Chiara says

Personalmente la ritengo "la Lady Oscar mediorientale".

Padre non soddisfatto dalla nascita di una femmina, decide di crescerla come un maschio e fare di lei un guerriero.

Comunque è un bel libro, molto intenso.

Vargha says

One of the best books I've ever read! The story is HARD TO BELIEVE, but the writing style is awesome.

Samah Bawatneh says

One of my favorite books/novels ever if not the only one, I always recommend this book as my number one book ??

Ahmad Sharabiani says

Samira dan Samir = Samira and Samir, Siba Shakib

This is a story of love and courage, and of a remarkable woman who finds her own path in life. When the young girl, Samira, is born, her father - a brave commander fighting in the mountainous land of Afghanistan - decides to bring her up as a boy known as Samir. Soon the fact that Samir is really a girl has been forgotten.

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Joanka says

This might be not the most exciting read but it offers a lot. It offers a peek into Afghan people's (mostly Hazara people from Hindukush) lives, an interesting comment on gender and sexuality in general, not necessarily restricted to Afghan/muslim way of thinking. The language might be problematic and not for everyone - it's so simple it can be irritating but in this simplicity the author finds poetry that really appeals to me (from what I noticed it's very common for the writers from this region - as opposed to Arabic fiction for instance, where everything is so rich and flowery, often too much so for me). It leaves you with questions broader than the culture the book describes (e.g. social roles based on gender, but not only) - and I guess this can be enough of a recommendation.

Francis Franklin says

A deeply emotional story with very well portrayed, vivid characters, that provides an insight to Afghan culture and the suffering of women.

Riyana Baboo says

One of the books that left me gasping. The story and characters are charming and seamless. I read this more than 7 years back and it's still lingering inside my mind. A desperate attempt to read this book again.

Faith Mortimer says

Difficult to star rate this book as I really want to give it a 3.5*, not quite a 4*

This novel is an extraordinary true story of a young Afghan girl, who is brought up as a boy by her parents. Her father is devastated that his wife has not brought forth a boy child as his first born. There are a few parts in the telling that I found a bit confusing. For example; father needed a son as his first born, to succeed him as commander of their nomadic tribe. Not sure whether Afghan culture demanded the death of the first born girl or not - the writing is a bit sketchy around this part.

The style of Siba Shakib is very unusual; Daria finds her child. Come, she says. No punctuation. At times it made me wonder if the narrator was actually talking or dreaming. Indeed half of the whole book was told as if in a tortuous dream.

Back to the story; Samira (the girl) becomes Samir (the boy). She has absolute male freedom, despite feeling increasingly uneasy as she grows older. She becomes the provider and protector for herself and mother, and now real difficulties arise when she begins to mix with boys in their early teens and older men.

Not wanting to spoil the story for anyone I won't divulge the story further, except to say that as she approaches adulthood she falls passionately in love, and she in turn is loved by both a male and female. Decision time - does she reveal her identity and give up her freedom - or remain a 'male' in a man's world where women are at most simply chattels and a vessel for their men's seed.

One paragraph near the end of the book summed it all up for me...Samira says, mother, we live in a country where even the men are not free. Were they free, they would not need to take women's freedom away. One who is free needs not to deny anyone else their freedom.

Thought provoking, extremely sad at times, a tale of remarkable courage and love. Well worth a read for the content and different literary style.

Anna says

This is an interesting story of a girl called Samira, who is brought up as a boy called Samir by her parents in Afghanistan.

Since the first child of the Commander needs to be a son- else the Commander is expected to marry twice, Samira is raised as a son. She is taught horse riding, a game called "buzkashi", hunting among the mountains and many "manly" stuffs by her father- the Commander. While the girl enjoys her childhood with her beloved father, her mother Daria is grief-stricken with the guilt of doing injustice to her daughter. As Samira grows up, she discovers- she is not a "real" man and faces many challenges in her life.

I particularly liked the easy language (a rather too simple btw) of the book, the characters, the plot and the story line itself. Shakib has proved that one need have a vast lexicon to describe the array of feelings the characters feel. I also liked the mixed emotions of Samira who knows she is a woman but acts like a man. It was interesting to see her develop romantic feelings which would eventually make her more confused. Whom is she supposed to like, men or women?

This book has also portrayed the grim reality of situation of women in Afghanistan, which resembles closely to that of rural Nepal. I liked the part where Samira arranges for women to be educated. The ending is beautiful- the fact that she chooses her dream over her love made me feel good.

Mariam says

One of the most outlandish stories I've ever read. But what's weird about the story is also what makes it brilliant: the duality of the character.

This beautiful girl (Samira) is brought up as a boy (Samir) in a culture that shames having a daughter as the first child, and worse, the only child.

Consequently, the father raises his Samira as Samir. He teaches her how to fight, ride, Shoot, haunt, etc. She dresses like a boy, talks like boy, walks like a boy. But Samira shows courage, she shows strength, she shows compassion. She becomes her mother's strength, her grandfather's missing arm. She is never scared, she is never fretful. She lives and acts as men do. As Samir, she teaches others lessons about bravery and confidence.

It's hard to decide whether Samira is a victor or a victim. But the author does a decent job of giving us a rare glimpse into the oppressive lives of the women in Afghanistan and the damages caused by gender constrained roles in certain Arab-Islamic societies.

One thing I didn't like about this book is the open ending - it didn't do it for me. I was waiting for something to happen, but at the end of it all no one really knows what happened to Samira.
