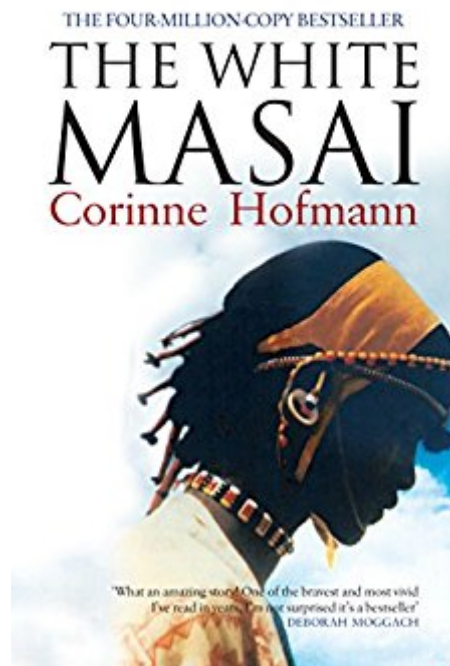




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The White Masai



Synopsis

Corinne Hofmann falls in love with a Masai warrior while on holiday with her boyfriend in Kenya. After overcoming all sorts of obstacles, she moves into a tiny shack with him and his mother in his village, and spends four years in Kenya. Slowly but surely the dream starts to crumble until she flees back home with her baby daughter born out of the seemingly indestructible love between a white European woman and a Masai. This is a major feature film to be released in the UK 2006.

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Customer Reviews

This is a true autobiography of a Swiss, German speaking twenty something tourist in the late 1980's in Kenya, falling in love at first sight with a young Massai. She pursues this obsession to the point of moving to live in his mother's tiny hut and eventually marrying him and bearing him a daughter. Even though married, they never could completely converse. The only somewhat common language would be English which neither could speak very well. She spoke no Swahili and he spoke no German. They were extremely mismatched, but it seemed to work for a few years. Her descriptions paint a vivid painting of Massai life and the society of both rural and metropolitan

Kenya.

The book is bizarre. She's bizarre. The book is written horribly, and I can't believe she put herself through so much all to be with this Masai gentleman?! I honestly didn't enjoy it, and read it only for book club. Will not recommend to anyone. Maybe if it was written better I would like the story more. An unbelievable story. Read it for that reason alone. Get ready to be amazed, and not in a good way.

My impression is that the author was naive and lacked maturity. She saw things only from her limited perspective (I would have loved to see a book written by her Masai Husband to get his perspective). Yes the cultural differences described are hard to overcome, but the author never tried. Instead of learning English, she should have studied the Maa language of the Masai. This would have allowed her to converse with a wider range of Masai so she could have learned more about their culture and traditions. She never describes how her husband went from owning only sheep and goats to acquiring cattle. My understanding of the Masai is that without cattle they cannot marry since they can't come up with a dowry for a wife. Her constant bouts with illness became boring. She had sufficient monies to purchase medication to ward off most of the illness. I don't understand why she consistently succumbed to these diseases. I found this book more fiction than fact. It certainly is not a romantic novel, nor is it an anthropological study.

How she could have fallen in love with a Masai is almost beyond belief. Plus she actually lived in a Masai hut and stayed for 4 years. Absolutely amazing. One day in a Masai hut and I would run away. When I was in Africa and spent a day at a Masai village I could not understand how they continue to live in their huts. I went inside a hut and the fire was going in the middle of the hut. I could not wait to leave cause the smoke was making my eyes tear and I felt Asthmatic. We went inside a small school for the children and all of them were coughing and had runny noses. They didn't sound healthy. I have heard that when the children go away to school, nine out of 10 do not return home. The book was a good read. I recommend it to anyone who has traveled to Africa and met the Masai people. They want to keep their culture alive and I commend them for it.

To clarify any misconception a prospective reader might have: this is not a romance. There are no romantic interchanges in this book, or even pleasant conversations. No tender glances while watching the Serengeti sunsets. No personal growth or entwining of lives and cultures. Although the

author does refer to her Masai husband occasionally as "my darling", that's the extent of any hint of affection between them. The only recorded conversations with her husband (really just short interchanges) involve his jealousy, anger, and accusations. Far more of the book centers around problems with cars than any discussion of relationships. Nor is this a meaningful book from the standpoint of social anthropology. The author shows no understanding of the Masai ways; she was just a European lady who bulldozed into their lives, had a baby and then took that baby from her Masai family and retreated back to Switzerland, with no apparent thought as to how much hurt she was leaving behind her. In fact, I can save the would be reader some time: The author was dirty and unkempt. She was often sick. She was mostly unhappy. Her car broke down on a more or less daily basis. When he wasn't off doing some warrior thing with his friends, her husband repeatedly accused her of infidelity. She kept running up against bureaucratic hassles and cried a lot. She gave up.

Could not put it down!! This book is about the fascinating relationship between two people from two drastically different cultures. I learned so much about the cultures and about human nature, as well as about the lives of the people and their families and friends. So much is different in developing countries...just could not put it down!

She gave up a middle class Swiss life, her career, her family and friends to suffer through ordeals and severe sicknesses that will probably haunt her for the rest of her life. Who on earth would fall instantly in love with a Masai from a remote African village, who's tribe followed old rituals and primitive every day living, uneducated and naive dominance and to follow his way of life and traditions because of compulsive love? Many times I felt frustrated of how little her Masai contributed to everything and how much she sacrificed towards the extent of her obsession for him. Needless to say at the end she is the maker of her undoings and fortunately her child is her everlasting love.

This was a great story of love and human adventure. I was amazed that this lady was able to live among the Masai in such harsh conditions. My hat is off to you sister to live such a "hard life". It's amazing what the human spirit will endure when captured with a "heart of love". Thanks for this amazing story Corinne. I look forward to reading about your reunion and seeing the film.

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