

Saira Ahmed

Disgraced

Forced to marry a stranger
Betrayed by my own family
Sold my body to survive

This is my story



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Brought up in a violent Muslim household, where family honour is all, Saira is watched 24 hours a day.

However, an innocent friendship with a boy is uncovered and Saira is sent to Pakistan, punished for dishonouring her family.

There, the nightmare really begins. Forced to marry an older stranger who rapes her repeatedly and makes her his round-the-clock sex slave, she eventually plots her escape but, destitute, has to return to the family home in England. Once there, she discovers that one of her brothers has run up huge drug debts and Saira must earn money in the only way she can: by selling her body.

Disgraced is the true story of an innocence ruined and a life shattered. But it is also a tale of survival told by a woman who has finally discovered her true voice.

Disgraced Details

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From Reader Review Disgraced for online ebook

Rachael Brown says

sad book but a good read

Rochelle Byrne says

I found this book a really easy read and thoroughly enjoyed learning about other cultures and the displacement of Muslim women in Britain culture. Saira's story of survival is inspiring

Leo says

Thought provoking, really interesting book.

Karolien says

Read in Dutch so the review below is in Dutch.

Disgraced of zoals de titel in het Nederlands luidt " Voor mijn familie was ik dood" gaat over het leven van een meisje dat de dochter is van Pakistaanse migranten in Groot-Britannië.

Ze heeft in elk geval geen gemakkelijk leven, ze zit gevangen tussen twee culturen. De Pakistaanse cultuur van thuis uit waar ze een gehoorzame moslima moet zijn en de vrije Britse cultuur.

Deze twee naast elkaar lopende culturen conflicteren enorm en vaak vind ze het moeilijk om een goede moslima te zijn, een goede moslima in de ogen van haar familie toch.

Als meisje is ze in haar moslimfamilie sterk ondergewaardeerd en dus laat iedereen haar dit op elk mogelijk moment merken.

Hoewel ze op een bepaald moment in het verhaal allemaal sterk van haar afhankelijk zijn krijgt ze nog steeds niet alle waardering die ze verdient.

Saira's verhaal is vrij tragisch, ze kent niet veel geluk in deze roman.

Ik zou het boek vooral aanraden aan iedereen die graag meer wil weten over het leven migranten.

Saskia 'follow my shoes' Smith says

its a good book, story line of her live is very in depth and she doesnt hold back, which is what makes this a good book to read, i do recommend it.The book is a no holds barred account of a tragic life story. The narratve is engaging and the story unfolds well. An amazing story of survival, all the more remarkable when

you realise that these things are happening, not just in Pakistan, but in modern day Britain too. When Saira meets and falls for a young man, also of Pakistani origin, and wants to marry him, her brothers are shocked that she has dishonoured herself by even meeting someone. They are quick to put a stop to this. Saira is quickly dispatched to Pakistan and married off to someone she has never met, who wants a British passport. The marriage is traumatic, and Saira eventually manages to escape. Surprisingly she returns to her family in England, and goes back to earning, by any means, enough to pay off family debts. Beaten, abused, prostitution and many more horrific things happen to this girl, who in the end survived.

Sabrina Rutter says

I couldn't put this book down! There is so much to this woman's story! I couldn't believe all the things this young woman went through before she was even 20 years old. This is a really good memoir!

spoilers

Saira's problems pretty much started the day she was born as a girl in a strict muslim family. She was not allowed to play outside with the other neighborhood children, or go to their birthday parties so this made it difficult for her to ever form any friendships. Having no friends and feeling very low about herself due to her mothers constant putdowns Saira very rarely spoke up for herself.

Saira finally found the courage to stand up for herself when she was rejected as a possible bride by her sister-in-laws handsome brother. She went to confront him not knowing what horrible nightmare that would bring into her already difficult life.

Some parts of Saira's story may seem hard to accept as truth, especially the part about the loan sharks. Since I know a little about how immigrants get into debt with these criminals and also a little about a muslim womans pride I can honestly say I believe Saira. I know no muslim woman is going to claim she was a prostitute if she wasn't!

Saira's story is not only about a difficult life journey, but also about learning how to speak up for yourself, and taking your destiny into your own hands no matter how terrifying that might be.

Etdal says

I couldn't believe what Saira had to go through to help pay off her family's debt, without them knowing. While reading the book I wonder if she really had to go to that extreme, but you never know until you are put in the situation. An eye opener. But at the same time, she was a muslim woman and talked about God in the book, so as a God fearing woman as she was, I couldn't believe she let herself into prostitution without the fear of the hereafter. Were her brother's debt worth it? But she had a hard life and two failed marriages, the torture she endured by her 2nd husband was too much to bear, hard to read sometimes. But she wanted a life she was never able to have. I sympathized with Saira only to a certain point though.

Jomana Namavar says

This book was heartbreaking. However how the author generalized Muslims pissed me off. I am a Muslim girl who is studying engineering so I do have the right to study. I am a Muslim girl who can go out with friends without her parents on her back. My father and brother are Muslim men who I admire so much. My father is the most humble and loving man. So stop mixing your stupid culture and saying its Islam.

Kp says

Disgraced is a fantastic, true and loving novel. It has a great sense of knowledge. Truly, I think this book was exceptionally fantastic and views a great sense of humour.

I would truly recommend this book to adults.

Aaliyah Behbehani says

This book made me feel thankful for all the things that hasn't happened to me..

Nora says

done

Farid says

Well! To be honest it's a great inspirational and a heart touching book the story and the condition that the lady gone through is just a super example that how to be strong and move on in our life..

Rashad Raoufi says

its a harrowing tale, deeply moving and profoundly emotional,very honestly told. i dare not criticise the writing of the book simply because its too emotive to be analysed.it should read as part of someone broadcasting their message, thier life to us, and hers rightfully deserves to be read, however i think the character does not spend too much time or tell us more off her addiction to easy from prostitution as horrible as it is and its toll on her, she hints strongly which is very brave.i like the ending as it give us some hope, she survived and has window to future.

Harini R says

A very interesting theme prevalent in a lot of Asian communities at various levels of extremity.

The book describes a realistic society where family ties and woes are ranked higher up in priority; where marrying off a women (respectably) is seen as the ultimate purpose of their existence ; where within the walls of their own minds women are being subjected to torture & trauma continuously because of lack of independence.

While the book starts off very well arousing curiosity & interest , it starts losing sheen & withers away towards the end!

Danielle says

Indrukwekkend verhaal over leven in een wereld met twee culturen. Een inkijkje in een leven dat ik niet ken, en daar mag ik mijzelf gelukkig mee prijzen.
