



Dream Homes: From Cairo to Katrina, an Exile's Journey (Jewish Women Writers)

Joyce Zonana

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Dream Homes chronicles Joyce Zonana's quest to find a sense of home among people, foods, and places as far from her native Cairo as Oklahoma and Katrina-stricken New Orleans.

After the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, newlyweds Felix and Nellie Zonana flee Cairo with their infant daughter Joyce, ending up in Brooklyn. Growing up, Joyce swiftly realizes that her Jewish family and their Egyptian culture are neither typically American nor typically American-Jewish; they eat kobeba instead of kugel and speak French instead of Yiddish. Struggling with her feelings of isolation from other Americans and frustrated by never getting full access to Egyptian-Jewish culture, Zonana sets out on a life-long journey to find her place in the world.

She meets her extended family living in Colombia and Brazil and travels to Cairo to get a glimpse of her parents' past. After she and her mother survive the devastation of Katrina, Zonana comes to see that "home" is not a location, but a spiritual state of mind. Zonana's heritage and quest are also evoked in numerous photos and family recipes.

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