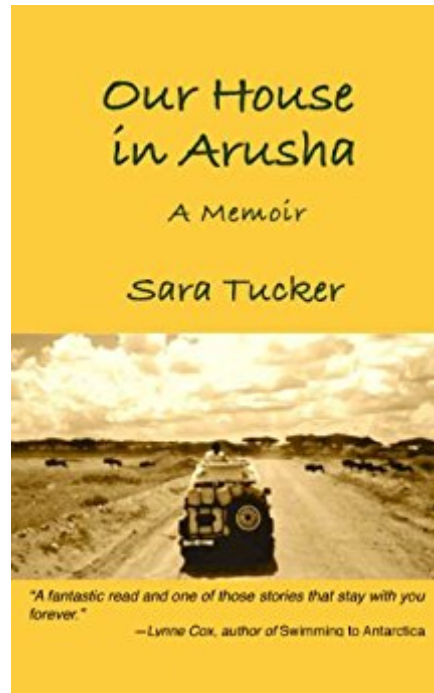




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Our House In Arusha



Synopsis

When an American traveler on her way to Kansas ends up in the Serengeti, her life gets a complete makeover. Within months, she is the wife of a French safari guide and the stepmother of an eleven-year-old. The year that follows is a test of courage and resilience as each member of the family struggles to make a place for himself in a tantalizing and dangerous world. Part love story, part adventure saga, *Our House in Arusha* explores the meaning of second chances.

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Customer Reviews

I absolutely love this book, so glad I happened on it. The writing right from the get go is clear and engaging. For a person who dreams of Africa, as I do, the content is splendid in it's breadth and in Tucker's ability to capture detail, her style is concise and telling. Simply put, this book boils down to being about love. Love of a continent, it's people, it's exasperations and it's about the author's love of the man who inspired her to remain there with him. M. Texier's life story is one that carries an astonishing breadth politically, with stories ranging from smuggling, poaching in game preserves done by very high level government entities to witnessing the result of the Kissinger/CIA-initiated

assassination of Chile's former, democratically elected president, Salvador Allende. The ability to capture all this in Tucker's agile writing style is sheer inspiration. As well, the story of M. Texier is among the most romantically inspired patchwork hop-skotches through life I have ever heard of. He found in Sara Tucker not only a "proper mother for his son" but one excellent storyteller who, in the end, conveys a very moving heart-felt love for the man and his love for the continent. When in the story it becomes necessary for them to come live in the US, this reader felt a sense of loss as keen as any I've known in leaving behind places I've loved. But it is his spirit, his optimism, his ability to make the most of what is which she writes about. Therein lies the love.

I loved this well written book of how American Sara Tucker fell in love with Tanzania while visiting on safari. She captures the beauty, the simple lifestyle, the frustrations and services breakdowns bush repairs and latterly a country beset by corruption. She meets and marries Frenchman Patrick and becomes mother to his son Thomas. I have just finished reading this book for the second time. First time round I couldn't wait to turn the pages, Second time was to fully read adventurer Patrick's life before Sara, in parts of West Africa as well as Tanzania. It is often hair raising and incredible how he managed to get out of difficult and life threatening situations. He went to Africa with nothing and three decades later left with Sara and Thomas with nothing, to settle in America when life became too frustrating and dangerous. How they settled to their new life is also described. Patrick missed Africa but accepted that, with age, it was better to have loved and lost than never to have known the magic of Africa. Highly recommended to anyone who enjoys a true story set in Africa in colonial and later times.

A well told and entertaining memoir of the authors, (Sara) first year and a half living in Arusha, Tanzania with her new French husband Patrick Texier (a restless adventurer) and his young son Thomas. Sara a travel writer from New York, ends up going to Africa in 1996 to take a Safari and write about it for the magazine she worked for. Patrick was her Safari guide and had lived in Africa most of his adult life. Sara ends up leaving a husband and all that she had in the USA to follow her heart, and although life was never easy, they never lacked adventures. The story is also, besides being about the three of them, and how they navigate this new relationship, but it is also about Patrick's harrowing past, the various marriages but mainly, his crazy jobs throughout his life. He did many jobs and not all were savory, from poaching, games warden, hunter, to working undercover, from stints in the USSR, to Chile during the assassination of Allende, but mainly his time in Africa, he is a man who finds it hard to live a "normal" life.

An enjoyable read although there were one or two things that bothered me. Eland definitely do not have antlers - they have horns. I think that more description about the places would have made better reading. I live in Africa so I can imagine Arusha but to folks in other parts of the world, a more graphic picture would have been good. The same goes for Togo. But all said, I enjoyed reading Sara, Patrick and Thomas' story.

Sara Tucker's *Our House in Arusha* is simply wonderful. She captures Africa in all its post-colonial disarray. She casts a wise and loving eye on a kaleidoscope of characters, from the French adventurer who steals her heart to his nine-year-old son who needs a mom, to the night watchman who somehow comes into possession of her warm socks, to Mr. Happy God Matoi, who -- while performing her marriage ceremony -- thinks to ask, "Will this marriage be polygamous, monogamous, or potentially polygamous?" Tucker sees the funny side with a clear eye, while writing with genuine warmth about Tanzania and Togo, about people and places that she might never have seen, had it not been for a chance event that switched her plan to go to Kansas to a safari that took her to the Serengeti and beyond. The people she meets along the way -- and describes with loving accuracy -- all seem to have leapt from the pages of the likes of V.S. Naipaul or Paul Theroux. *Our House in Arusha* is an adventure story, a love story, a story about making major life changes at a time when most are content to dream about impending retirement. Tucker relates these events with honesty, gentle humor, and descriptions so vivid that you can feel the humidity, see the jacarandas in bloom, and hear the roar of the lions in the bush.

Having been to Africa and Arusha, the title of the book attracted me. I had never heard of the book, nor the author, and yet found this to be just a great read---some very interesting insights into Africa's tumultuous, recent history with a familial touch that was both witty and extremely informative. The author did a super job of capturing daily life with the colorful continent as the backdrop. The book moves well and should be of interest to readers whether or not Africa is an appealing topic.

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