



Burmese Lessons: A true love story

Karen Connelly

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Orange Prize–winner Karen Connelly’s compelling memoir about her journey to Burma, where she fell in love with a leader of the Burmese rebel army.

When Karen Connelly goes to Burma in 1996 to gather information for a series of articles, she discovers a place of unexpected beauty and generosity. She also encounters a country ruled by a brutal military dictatorship that imposes a code of censorship and terror. Carefully seeking out the regime’s critics, she witnesses mass demonstrations, attends protests, interviews detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and flees from police. When it gets too risky for her to stay, Connelly flies back to Thailand, but she cannot leave Burma behind.

Connelly’s interest in the political turns more personal on the Thai-Burmese border, where she falls in love with Maung, the handsome and charismatic leader of one of Burma’s many resistance groups. After visiting Maung’s military camp in the jungle, she faces an agonizing decision: Maung wants to marry Connelly and have a family with her, but if she marries this man she also weds his world and his lifelong cause. Struggling to weigh the idealism of her convictions against the harsh realities of life on the border, Connelly transports the reader into a world as dangerous as it is enchanting.

In radiant prose layered with passion, regret, sensuality and wry humor, *Burmese Lessons* tells the captivating story of how one woman came to love a wounded, beautiful country and a gifted man who has given his life to the struggle for political change.

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