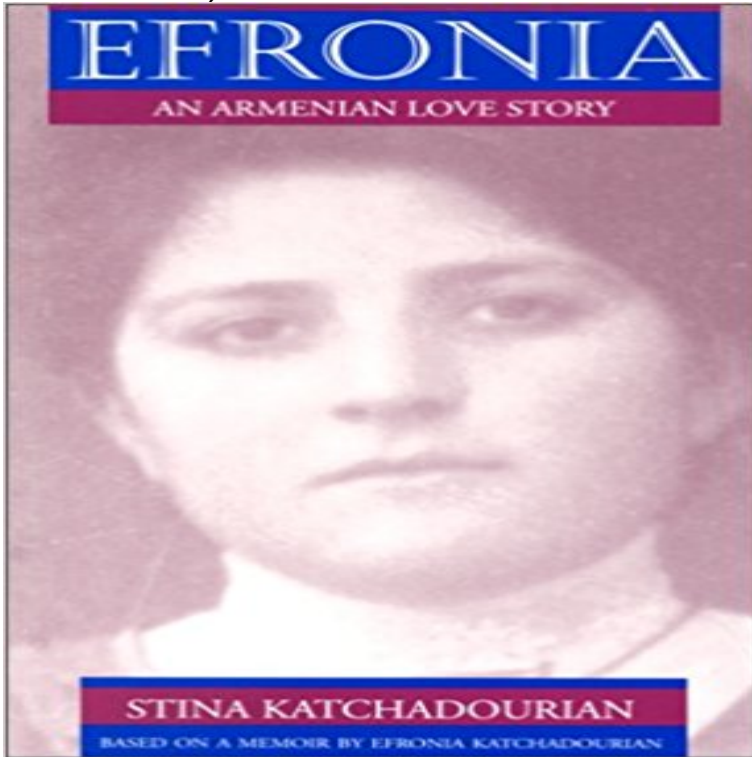


Efronia: An Armenian Love Story (Womens Life Writings from Around the World)



When eighty-two-year-old Efronia Katchadourian fled civil war in Lebanon for the United States in 1976 she brought little except pistachio nuts, dried figs, dates, and the searing memory of her secret, lost love. Efronia was born in 1894 to a Christian Armenian family living in the Ottoman empire. Though her father was brutally murdered when she was an infant, his death was only a foreshadowing of the greater tragedies that would befall the Armenian community and dramatically alter the young girls life. Efronia grew into a beautiful young woman and was pursued by many eligible suitors. Despite her desires for stability and freedom from her irresponsible brother, she spurned them all. But Ramzi was different; she fell in love with him when they first met. However, their passionate feelings for each other could not surmount the cultural, political, and religious obstacles to their marriage, for he was a Persian Moslem, she an Armenian Christian. Even if there was some hope that her family would eventually consent to the union, that hope was destroyed after the eruption of World War I and the massacre and deportation of Armenians living within the Ottoman empire. For half a century, Efronia told no one of her secret love for Ramzi. Only when she was in her late eighties, living in northern California with her son and his wife, did she write her memoirs, finally revealing the one love of her youth, which never diminished throughout her lifetime. After his mothers death, Herant Katchadourian translated her tragic account, discovering much that was new even to him. Stina Katchadourian has woven into the work her memories of her mother-in-law and provided the historical backdrop that is frighteningly familiar in this age of final solutions and ethnic cleansing. The result is an unforgettably poignant and moving narrative. Told with great warmth, this gripping account of a

strong and spirited woman evokes a place and time that, though destroyed forever, will neve

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