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Last Days in Babylon: The Story of the Jews of Baghdad

By Benjamin, Marina

Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, London, 2007. Hardcover with dust jacket. Book Condition: BRAND NEW. Marina Benjamin grew up in London feeling estranged from her family's Middle Eastern ways, refusing to speak the Arabic her mother and grandmother spoke at home and rejecting the peculiar food they ate. But when Benjamin had her own child, she realised that she was losing her link to the past. And so, in 2004, Benjamin visited Baghdad for the first time, searching for her family's history amongst the remains of its once vital Jewish community, the roots of which predate the birth of Islam by a thousand years. What she discovered will haunt anyone who seeks to understand a country whose ongoing struggles continue to command the world's attention. When Iraq gained independence in 1932, Jews were the largest and most prosperous ethnic group in Baghdad. Just twenty years later, the community had been utterly ravaged, its members effectively expelled from the country by a hostile Iraqi government. Benjamin's grandmother, Regina Sehayek lived through it all: born in 1905, her life of privilege was little affected when the British marched into Iraq. But with the rise of Arab nationalism and the first stirrings of anti-Zionism, Regina...



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