



## Sister of My Heart: A Novel

By Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

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### Sister of My Heart: A Novel By Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

From the award-winning author of **Mistress of Spices**, the bestselling novel about the extraordinary bond between two women, and the family secrets and romantic jealousies that threaten to tear them apart.

Anju is the daughter of an upper-caste Calcutta family of distinction. Her cousin Sudha is the daughter of the black sheep of that same family. Sudha is startlingly beautiful; Anju is not. Despite those differences, since the day on which the two girls were born, the same day their fathers died--mysteriously and violently--Sudha and Anju have been sisters of the heart. Bonded in ways even their mothers cannot comprehend, the two girls grow into womanhood as if their fates as well as their hearts were merged.

But, when Sudha learns a dark family secret, that connection is shattered. For the first time in their lives, the girls know what it is to feel suspicion and distrust. Urged into arranged marriages, Sudha and Anju's lives take opposite turns. Sudha becomes the dutiful daughter-in-law of a rigid small-town household. Anju goes to America with her new husband and learns to live her own life of secrets. When tragedy strikes each of them, however, they discover that despite distance and marriage, they have only each other to turn to.

Set in the two worlds of San Francisco and India, this exceptionally moving novel tells a story at once familiar and exotic, seducing readers from the first page with the lush prose we have come to expect from Divakaruni. **Sister of My Heart** is a novel destined to become as widely beloved as it is acclaimed.

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## **Sister of My Heart: A Novel** By Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni made an indelible impression on the literary world with her first novel, *The Mistress of Spices*, a magical tale of love and herbs. *Sister of My Heart* is less reliant on enchantment but no less enchanting as it tells the tale of two cousins born on the same day, their premature births brought on by a mysterious occurrence that claims the lives of both their fathers. Sudha is beautiful, Anju is not; yet the girls love each other as sisters, the bond between them so strong it seems nothing can break it. When both are pushed into arranged marriages, however, each discovers a devastating secret that changes their relationship forever.

*Sister of My Heart* spans many years and zigzags between India and America as the cousins first grow apart and then eventually reunite. Divakaruni invests this domestic drama with poetry as she traces her heroines' lives from infancy to motherhood, but it is Sudha and Anju who give the story its backbone. Anju might speak for both when she says, "In spite of all my insecurities, in spite of the oceans that'll be between us soon and the men that are between us already, I can never stop loving Sudha. It's my habit, and it's my fate." Book lovers may well discover that reading Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is habit-forming as well. --Margaret Prior

### From Publishers Weekly

Like the old tales of India that are filled with emotional filigree and flowery prose, Divakaruni's (*The Mistress of Spices*) latest work is a masterful allegory of unfulfilled desire and sacrificial love. It is also an intricate modern drama in which generations and castes struggle over old and new mores. Anju and Sudha are cousins, born in the same household in Calcutta on the same day—which is also the day on which their mothers learn that both their husbands have been killed in a reckless quest for a cave full of rubies. Sudha grows up believing her father was a no-good schemer who brought ruin on his cousin, Anju's upper-class father. As they mature, Anju dreams of college, Sudha of children, but arranged marriages divide and thwart them. Anju adjusts to life in California with a man who lusts after Sudha; Sudha grapples with a mother-in-law who turns to the goddess Shasti to fill Sudha's barren womb rather than to a doctor for her sterile son. Ultimately, the tie between Anju and Sudha supersedes all other love, as each sustains painful loss to save the other. When Sudha learns the truth about her father and no longer needs to right his wrongs, she sees that all along her affection for Anju has not been dictated by necessity. An inspired and imaginative raconteur, Divakaruni is sure to engender comparisons with Arundhati Roy (*The God of Small Things*), but Divakaruni's novel stands in its own right as a compelling read. If her prose sometimes veers toward the purple, her mesmerizing narrative sustains it well. Agent, Sandra Dijkstra; author tour. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

### From Library Journal

Like Rebecca Wells's *Divine Secrets of the Ya Ya Sisterhood* (LJ 5/1/96), Divakaruni's debut novel, *The Mistress of Spices* (LJ 2/1/97), was a word-of-mouth hit; its blend of magical realism and culinary sensuality also appealed to fans of Laura Esquivel's *Like Water for Chocolate* (LJ 9/1/92). This second novel is a bit more earth-bound. Born on the same day their fathers die in a mysterious accident, Sudha and Anju are more than just cousins; although Anju is the daughter of an upper-caste Calcutta family and Sudha the daughter of a black-sheep renegade, they are sisters of the heart, bound by a deep love. Narrated by Sudha and Anju in alternate chapters, this is the tale of their relationship over the years, a friendship that is almost destroyed by jealousy and family secrets. Although much of the plot is contrived (the final revelation is no big surprise) and the male characters are stock clichés, this is still an engaging read, filled with tender, moving moments. For popular fiction collections.

-?Wilda Williams, "Library Journal"

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Brent Cook:**

Reading can called thoughts hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book specifically book entitled Sister of My Heart: A Novel your brain will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in most aspect that maybe unknown for but surely will become your mind friends. Imaging each and every word written in a e-book then become one form conclusion and explanation that maybe you never get before. The Sister of My Heart: A Novel giving you yet another experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful info for your better life in this particular era. So now let us teach you the relaxing pattern here is your body and mind is going to be pleased when you are finished looking at it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

#### **Ines Patterson:**

You could spend your free time to study this book this reserve. This Sister of My Heart: A Novel is simple to create you can read it in the playground, in the beach, train as well as soon. If you did not possess much space to bring the printed book, you can buy the actual e-book. It is make you better to read it. You can save the actual book in your smart phone. And so there are a lot of benefits that you will get when you buy this book.

#### **Benjamin Torres:**

Is it anyone who having spare time then spend it whole day by simply watching television programs or just resting on the bed? Do you need something new? This Sister of My Heart: A Novel can be the respond to, oh how comes? It's a book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your spare time by reading in this brand new era is common not a nerd activity. So what these guides have than the others?

#### **Norma Eberhart:**

Don't be worry in case you are afraid that this book can filled the space in your house, you can have it in e-book method, more simple and reachable. This particular Sister of My Heart: A Novel can give you a lot of good friends because by you taking a look at this one book you have matter that they don't and make a person more like an interesting person. That book can be one of a step for you to get success. This reserve offer you information that probably your friend doesn't know, by knowing more than different make you to be great individuals. So , why hesitate? Let's have Sister of My Heart: A Novel.

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