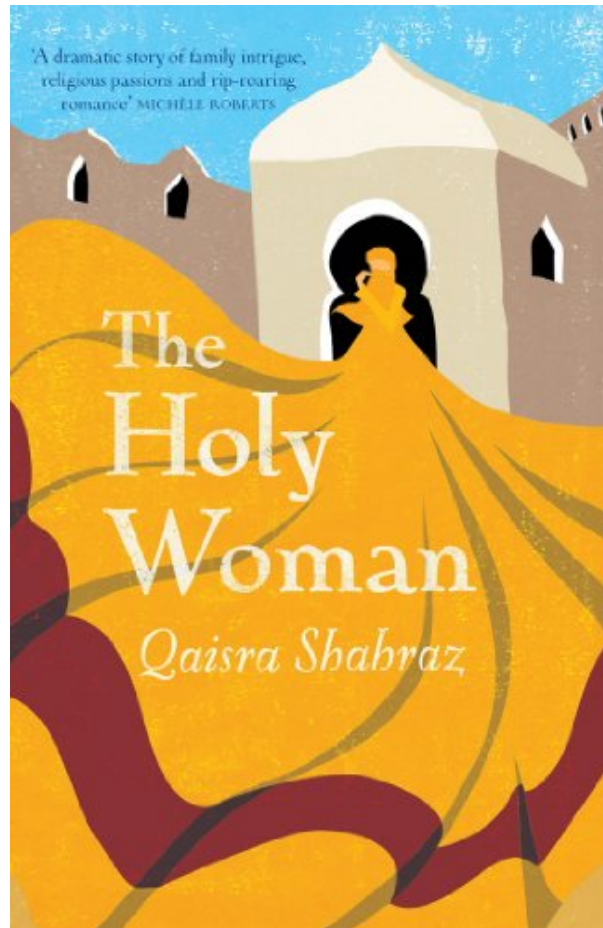
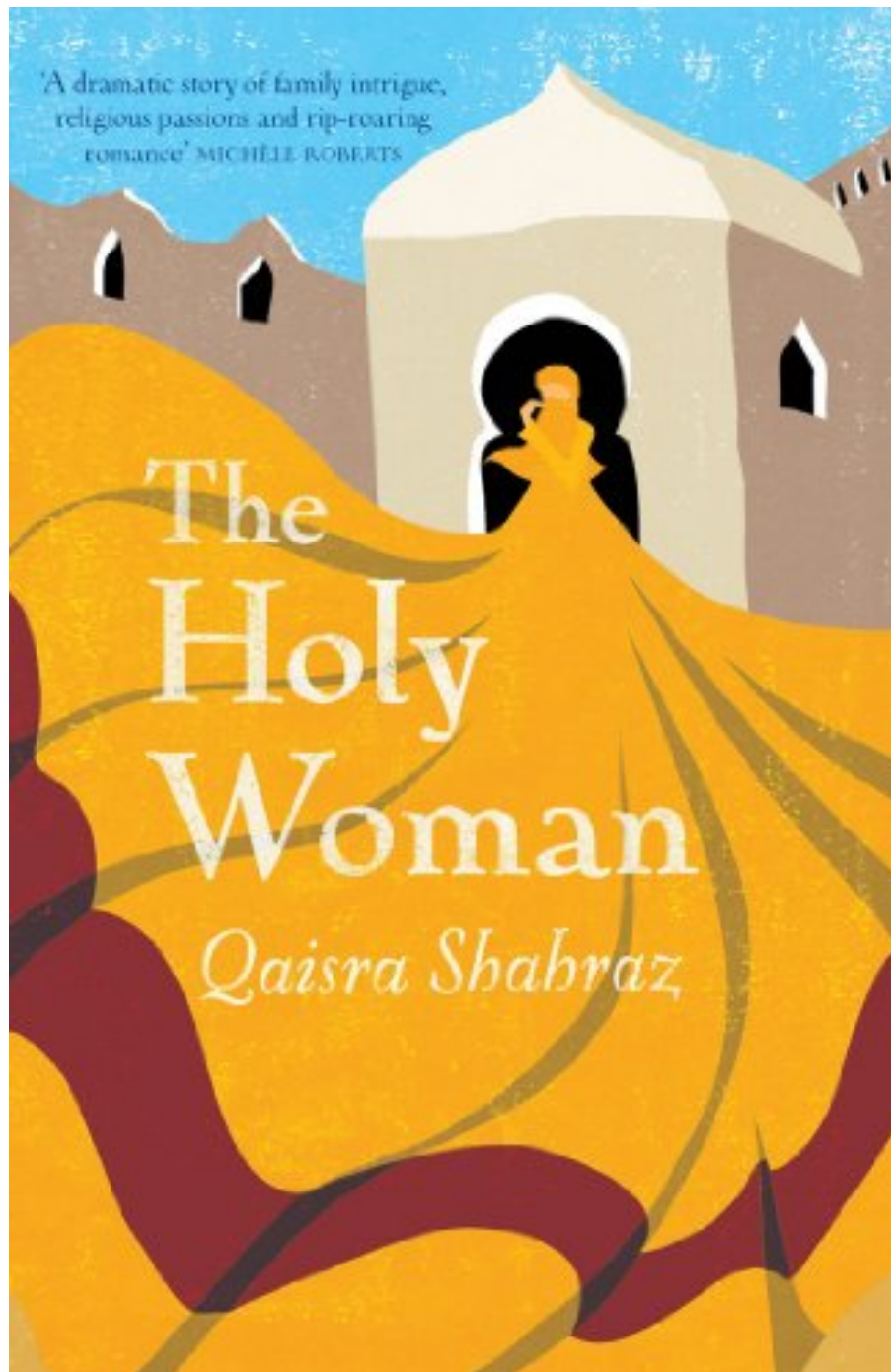


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## Review

A lean, lyrical meditation on tradition and independence, sensuality and sacrifice, set against the mortal battleground of modern-day Pakistan --The Times

## About the Author

Qaisra Shahraz is the author of Typhoon and has written extensively for numerous magazines, newspapers, and television shows, including the acclaimed 14 episode drama serial Dil Hee to Hai, produced in Pakistan and shown around the world.

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Set in contemporary Pakistan, London, and Egypt, this compelling family drama is a romantic story of love and betrayal in a wealthy Muslim family experiencing conflicts between old traditions and modern life. Zarri, the glamorous 28-year-old daughter of a wealthy landowner, falls in love and wishes to marry Sikander, a business tycoon. Her father, Habib, dislikes Sikander and prohibits their marriage. Soon after, Habib's only son is killed in an accident and he decides to make Zarri his heiress, resurrecting an ancient tradition that requires an heiress to remain celibate for the rest of her life. Unable to marry, Zarri is forced to submit to her father and becomes her clan's holy woman.

- Sales Rank: #1243207 in Books
- Published on: 2013-12-31
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.50" h x 5.00" w x 1.50" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 570 pages

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## Most helpful customer reviews

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Good work!

By A Customer

Qaisra Shahraz pleasantly surprises with her debut novel. Set in a village in Sind, the readers are taken across the world to Cairo, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, as the story unravels.

The university educated heroine, Zarri Bano (ZB) - beautiful and elegant - meets her match in Sikander, a debonair Karachi-based business tycoon. Accepting his proposal, she goes as far as dreaming of setting up a press in Karachi after marriage. But fate and her patriarchal clan catch up with her and her world turns topsy-turvy: her overly possessive father after his only son's death decrees that the stylish ZB devote her life to religion and praying, forbidding marriage to her, so as to keep the family property from falling into "outsiders' " hands. How ZB copes with her new life makes for a very interesting reading. There is a parallel strain in the novel, too, which though less absorbing, provides insight into the lives of village folk.

The steadfastness and incredible will power of ZB transcends through the pages - she instils energy in the readers. Once started, the novel is difficult to put down; it awes and beguiles when least expected.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Any woman, anywhere...

By Ukrainka2011

Though sitting in an air-conditioned room, I could feel the heat of the desert when the then mysterious man stole his first glance of Zarri Bano. While reading further, I often caught myself having not exhaled for some time – the descriptions of everything from the food to the living spaces to the clothing to the people themselves made me shocked when I looked up and realized they were not in the room with me. The writing in *The Holy Woman* conveys such clear images with such a pace that reading is like being in the presence of the characters in their world.

The main female characters are strength incarnate. Each in her own way has been dealt an unexpected had either by society and its expectations or by cruel twists of fate. In her own time, each woman manages to find a place within to question how best to respond to the challenge. Some do it immediately with a dignity and grace to be emulated; others take decades to overcome their anguish. I especially loved Zarri Bano, admiring her ability to authentically manage her challenges in life, and to do so without a trace of bitterness. I was especially moved by the way she realized that with her background and support and new status as a Holy Woman, she could educate and help so many women. Far from locking herself away from the world, she was able to give more than she would have with her original life plan. She took what could have been crushing and turned it into a victory for herself and for other women. Would it not be wonderful if we could all do that in our own way?

So many painful truths are revealed in the dialogues, but reading them and knowing their applicability to any time and any place made me feel that some truths are truly universal, and suffering, love, and confusion are all a part of the human emotional landscape, and we will face them at some point – hopefully with dignity and an eye toward making lemonade out of those lemons. Spending time with the characters of *The Holy Woman* will make you sad to turn the last page of the book – but luckily there are at least two more novels, *Typhoon* and *Revolt*, to savor as well!

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Great Reading

By A Customer

I really enjoyed reading *Holy Woman*. I was amazed about the way a woman would go through. She is one strong woman. When she was happy I was happy!! When she was upset I felt upset as well. I felt like I was feeling what she was going through. Cant wait to read the sequel "*Typhoon*"

I recommend to ppl to read it.

See all 11 customer reviews...

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