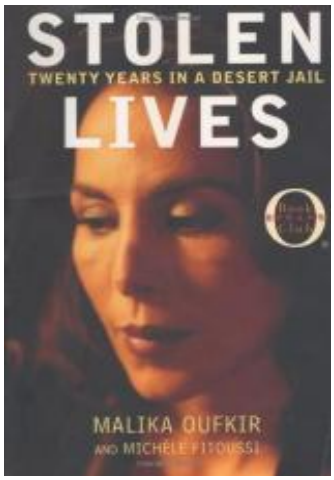
Stolen Lives

by Malika Oufkir



About the Book

Malika Oufkir and her family spent more than twenty years in prison at the hands of the Moroccan government. In 1972, her father, the King of Morocco?s highest aide, was arrested and executed for his alleged part in a plot to assassinate the King. Malika, who spent many years living at the Palace as a companion to Princess Amina, suddenly found herself betrayed by the person she had come to regard as a father figure. She and her family were caught in the midst of a violent political turmoil beyond their control.

In **Stolen Lives**, Malika recounts the long years that she, her five siblings, and her mother spent trying to survive in the worst of conditions. Filled with honesty, emotion, and humor, **Stolen Lives** is a gripping and heartrending account of one family?s unbreakable bond and a testament to the resilience of the human spirit.

Discussion Guide

1. Malika and her family endure twenty-four years in prison. What do you think enabled them to survive for so long under such harsh conditions?

2. Describe the relationship between Malika and her family. As the eldest of the children, does she bear more of the responsibility to keep the family together? How does she accomplish this?

3. Referring to The Story, Malika states that it ?was part of our everyday life, to the point that it caused arguments and passions to flare.? Later she says, ?These days, when we?re together, we rarely speak of our time in prison, but the Story has lost nothing of its magic. When one of us mentions one of the characters, faces light up. It remains our best memory of this horrendous period.? Discuss the part The Story plays in the life of the Oufkirs and why it was so important to them.

4. After her release, Malika meets with Princess Amina, about whom she says, ?I felt no animosity towards her. Seeing her again was to reclaim my childhood, rekindle feelings that I had repressed deep down inside me, but which were perhaps not quite dead. I also wanted to prove to the King that, unlike him, I was able to make a distinction between him, the man who remained my enemy, and the other members of his family.? What does this say about Malika?s character?

5. What did you learn about the history and politics of Morocco from reading this book?

6. In the Preface, co-author Michèle Fitoussi states that **Stolen Lives** ?is not an indictment. History will the judge of the crimes, and that is not our intention. Nor is it an exposé.? How would you classify this book? What thoughts and feelings did you come away with after reading **Stolen Lives**?

Author Bio

Malika Oufkir lives in Paris and is married to an architect. **Michèle Fitoussi** is of Tunisian descent, and is the author of two novels and a collection of short stories as well as being the literary editor of French Elle.

Critical Praise

"Oufkir's harrowing memoir details the unfathomable conditions [she and her family] endured and the remarkable will and sense of humor that kept them alive. "

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Publication Date: June 1, 2001
Hardcover: 293 pages
Publisher: Miramax Books
ISBN-10: 0786868619
ISBN-13: 9780786868612