



Sweetness in the Belly

Lilly is eight when her Irish parents are killed in Morocco. She is placed in the care of a Muslim disciple who fills her days with the teachings of Islam.

As a young woman, she is forced to move to Ethiopia. Lilly, though a white-skinned foreigner, insinuates herself into the local community through her profound knowledge of Muslim teachings. She teaches local children the Qur'an and soon gains the community's trust and friendship.

She also falls deeply and passionately in love with Aziz, a medical student who supports the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie. Lilly's tenuous ties to Britain force her to flee to London when Selassie is deposed. Aziz stays behind to fight in the revolution.

In spite of her 'whiteness', Lilly feels stronger ties to Muslim refugees than to the British, who feel increasingly threatened by the refugees' presence. Lilly throws herself into running an agency to reunite people who have lost family in the migration from Ethiopia. But her motives are in great part personal. She is longing to find Aziz again.

When she finds out he was killed, her faith in love and in Islam are tested. Both are renewed once again through the love of a British Asian doctor who also has made a home for himself in the emigré condition.