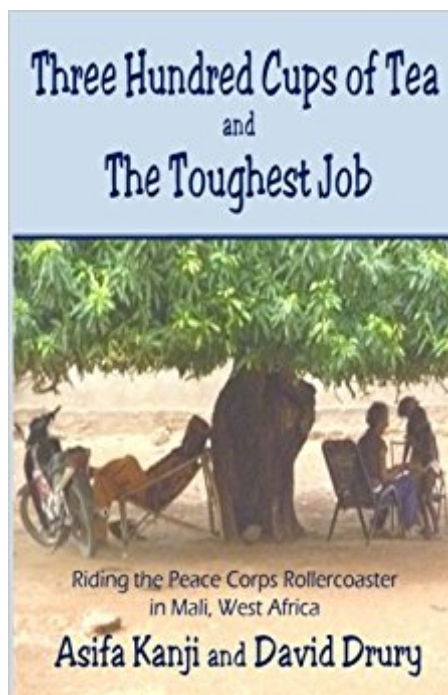




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Three Hundred Cups Of Tea And The Toughest Job: Riding The Peace Corps Rollercoaster In Mali, West Africa



Synopsis

Even if Trouble is staring you in the face, be good to people. Dance. When David and Asifa said yes to serving with the Peace Corps in Mali, little did they know they were stepping onto a rollercoaster that would test their endurance, their creativity and patience. At age 60 and 57 they found themselves on the shore of the great Sahara Desert, posted to one of the hottest and poorest parts of Africa. She took up the fight against malnutrition, with a campaign to cultivate the nourishing Moringa tree; he worked with a radio station and cybercafé that cultivated values of democracy and religious toleration. They found love in a hopeless place, a place that challenged them to look again at friendship, family, and development with fresh eyes. It's a crazy tale of vampire cats, giant termites and Toyota-flattening freight trains, not to mention playful conjugal text-message sex to pass those weary hours of waiting for the bush taxi. Most of all it is a story of the warm-hearted Malian people, set against a darker background of approaching famine and political unrest, and culminating in the couple's first-hand accounts of the military coup and Peace Corps evacuation from Mali in 2012. Told with humor and compassion, the side-by-side memoirs *300 Cups of Tea* and *The Toughest Job You'll Ever Love* take you on a 14 month journey of life in the Sahel. Proceeds will be donated to the Peace Corps Partnership fund to support volunteer-led grassroots projects in Mali. Contact us at ddruryandsonspub@gmail.com

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Customer Reviews

Asifa Kanji grew up in Tanzania and Kenya, was schooled in England, fell in love and followed her heart to America in 1975. She has been a teacher, a henna artist, a computer programmer, a

dilettante, a care giver and a traveler who loves to write. When she is not someplace else, she lives in Hawaii or Oregon with her editor, her publisher, her chief art critic, and her husband. David Drury has been a university Lecturer, an applied social science researcher in the US and other countries, a truck driver, Census taker, and London busker. With Asifa, he has served with the Peace Corps in Mali, Ghana, and South Africa. David lives in Hilo or Ashland with his Most Difficult Client, and strives to achieve moderation in all things, including moderation.

Excellent read. This book contains two different writing styles, both boasting an admirable command of the English language. The first parades more of an artistic personality and the other displays a bit more the training of an intellectual and free thinker. They are two books in one, the first half is written by Asifa, and the second by her fantastic companion, David. Asifa and David were thirsty for an adventure, consequently they joined the Peace Corps (PC), and page by page they lead us through their journey. In the comfort of my air conditioned and while lapping at my Colombian coffee I laugh, wonder, worry, and learn, alongside them, through the magic of the leaves of their book. Asifa learned that these "new relatives" that she just met wash their behinds with their left hand, therefore, they only eat with their right . . . but, she "has seen those left hands come up to help the right hand from time to time." David feels that Chronic beerlessness is a serious problem in the village, leading to weight loss and a disturbing clarity of mind. And, apparently, while in Mali, David, instead of dreaming of fame and fortune he dreamt of clean horizontal surfaces. After reading this book I am so glad that I am not a woman, specially a woman giving birth in Mali, because : " . . . as she nonchalantly grabbed a pair of surgical scissors and just snipped the vagina of the birthing mother. No anesthetic, no antiseptic, no warning. . ."

This is a wonderful book. Asifa and David tell the story of their choice to join the Peace Corps and serve in Mali, West Africa with great heart and humor. At an age when many are preparing for retirement, this couple joins young volunteers in one of the poorest countries in the world. But they discover a kind of wealth as they struggle to find a means of being of service in a way that really matters. Along the way, they encounter fascinating people, elaborate greeting rituals, joking cousins, and ultimately friends and family. And did I mention the dust and the heat? The picture of Asifa brooming the dust out the apartment daily and David riding his bike to work under a 120 degree sky remain emblazoned in my brain. I am just left, however, with a feeling of immense gratitude for getting to know Mali and Malians.

My husband and I both could not put this book down. When Asifa's delightful stories about her experiences as a senior in the Peace Corps came to an end, we could not wait to read David's. I thought Asifa did a masterful job of describing both her surroundings and her own reactions to them. I could feel her frustration as she dealt with the problems of rural and even urban Mali. David's writing was more of a practical explanation of what was going on, but it drew us into his feelings as well. Having these two different sets of insight about what was going on gave a much fuller picture than one would have done by itself. An excellent look at today's Peace Corps and how two older Americans worked within it.

Ever think about what it would be like to join the Peace Corp? Well, this is your chance to share Asifa's adventures but stay comfy and cosy in your favorite armchair. The author brought to life the adventure, cultural experiences and at times potential danger of living in a foreign country. She shared her struggle to learn the language, culture and how to navigate the everyday necessities of life -- food, water, cooking, bathroom....wait a minute, what bathroom? It's certainly not our understanding of the necessities of life. The tales of travel hardships, the colorful characters she met and the people she helped gave this book a vividness I enjoyed very much and helped me to understand how much the people of Peace Corp are giving to the world.

Wonderful story about a couple's time in the Peace Corps in West Africa. Well written with a glimpse into what it's like to be thrown into a completely different set of circumstances while trying to make a difference in people's lives. Very interesting and hard to put down. Thank you Asifa and David!

The story of a Peace Corp adventure in Mali taken by an upper-middle-age couple. Their honesty--about themselves--as they tell their story, and the sometimes humorous learning experiences made this book difficult to put down! I learned of another culture in a most enjoyable way.

I learned so much about the Peace Corps and so enjoyed the humor mixed in with all of their experiences. Wonderful writers, great that there are also photos throughout the book.

This is one of those books it is hard to set down once you begin. The writing is so clever and you can just imagine what it would be like to be there! It is a wonderful read!!!!

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