

Strangers in the House: Coming of Age in Occupied Palestine

Raja Shehadeh



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"This is not a political book," Anthony Lewis asserts in his foreword to this revealing memoir of a father-son relationship set against the backdrop of more than thirty years of life under military occupation. "Yet in a hundred different ways it is political. . . . Shehadeh shatters the stereotype many Americans have of Palestinians."

Three years after his family was driven from the city of Jaffa in 1948, Raja Shehadeh was born in Ramallah. His early childhood was marked by his family's sense of loss and impermanence, vividly evoked by the glittering lights "on the other side of the hill." He witnessed the numerous arrests of his father, Aziz, who, in 1967, was the first Palestinian to advocate a peaceful, two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He predicted that if peace were not achieved, what remained of the Palestinian homeland would be taken away bit by bit. Ostracized by his fellow Arabs and disillusioned by the failure of either side to recognize his prophetic vision, Aziz retreated from politics. He was murdered in 1985.

The first memoir of its kind by a Palestinian living in the occupied territories, **Strangers in the House** offers a moving description of daily life for those who have chosen to remain on their land. It is also the family drama of a difficult relationship between an idealistic son and his politically active father, complicated by the arbitrary humiliation of the "occupier's law."



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