

The Sailmaker's Daughter



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It is 1918 and the Spanish flu is epidemic in Suva, the capital of Fiji. Twelve-year-old Olive is sent with her brothers and grandmother to Taveuni to stay with her childless aunt and uncle on their sugar plantation to escape the disease as her mother lies dying of the flu in their family home. The months that follow hold magic and sorrow for Olive, as she uncovers well-kept family secrets and grieves for her dying mother. The Sailmaker's Daughter is dedicated to the memory of Stephanie Johnson's grandmother, who was born in Fiji in 1905. Like Olive in the book, her grandmother was one of a large family; her father was the sailmaker in Suva and her mother died of the Spanish flu at the end of the Great War. The Sailmaker's Daughter is both a tribute to Stephanie Johnson's grandmother and a powerful evocation of a mystical paradise lived and lost.

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目录:

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