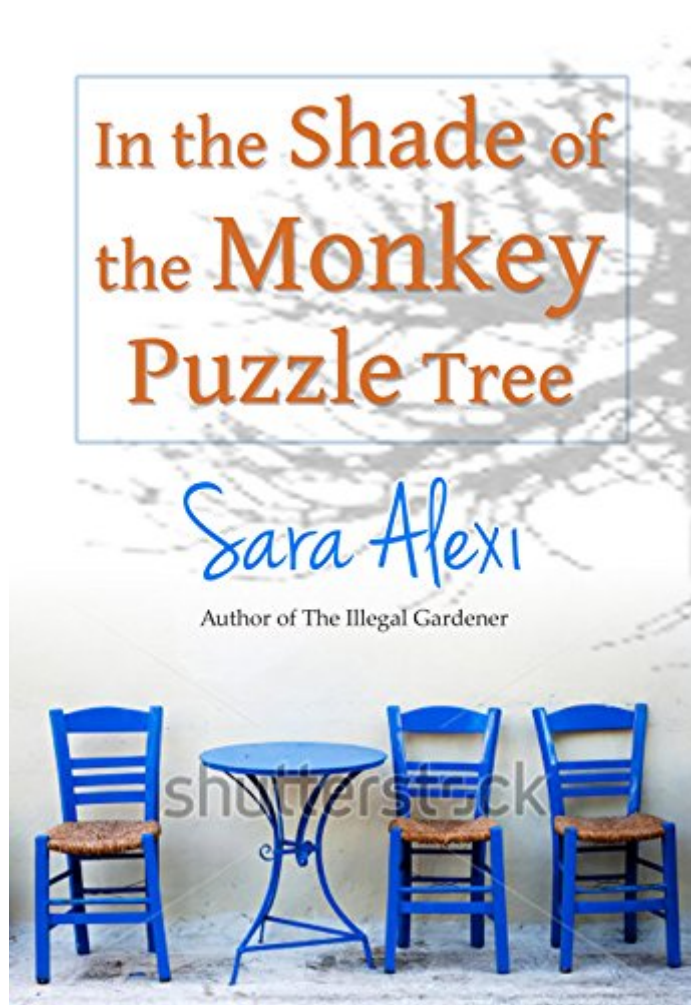


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In The Shade Of The Monkey Puzzle Tree (The Greek Village Series Book 4)



Synopsis

From an idyllic Greek village steeped in tradition to the smoke and noise of 1970s Athens, *In the Shade of the Monkey Puzzle Tree* is a tale of a belated coming of age for one man whose dreams take him beyond the comfort of the only way of life he's ever known. Dissatisfied with life in a tiny village where nothing much happens, Theo, in his forties, makes a decision to move away from an uninspiring future running the village café, and from his controlling father who he feels will forever see him as a child. Determined to make his mark and stand on his own, Theo travels to Athens to make a new life amongst the unpredictable, unfamiliar hustle and bustle of the city. But things do not turn out as expected, and time and again Theo finds his morals and honesty being tested, as urban life challenges all that he holds dear. As Theo finds himself making bad choices and slowly becoming somebody he doesn't like in order to survive, he is torn between sticking it out and returning home; that is if returning home is even an option after how he left things with his father. As he discovers his humble needs are to earn his keep and find a woman to love and marry, will the unpredictable ways of life in the big city prove to be everything Theo wanted, or will the village really hold his heart?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Yesterday evening, I purchased an electronic copy of Sara Alexi's 6th book - "In the Shade of the Monkey Puzzle Tree." Last night I read until I could no longer focus but hated to put down the book so that I could sleep and rest my eyes. Then late this afternoon, after chores were finished, I started reading again. Finally at 3 a.m., I have finished and enjoyed this book as much as all her other ones. Each one of Ms. Alexi's books are full of wonderfully described characters of a little Greek village, who have become my friends. When I have finished any of her books, it is like leaving a favorite vacation spot and I'm left wondering when I can return to enjoy that place and the delightful people again. The main focus of this book is Theodoros Kokoromitis (or Theo) who at 40 years old is working for his father in the small village kafeneio (coffee shop). His father still treats him as a child and will not let him make any changes to the shop. Finally, after a bad day in which his father accidentally burns Theo's hand, Theo leaves the village in the early morning taking money from the shop's till and gets on a bus to Athens. He finds the big city is rough and tough on an innocent man who has never been far from home. Throughout this adventure Theo begins to build his confidence and learns not to be tempted to lower his standards while working at an unscrupulous bar. There is romance, danger and bravery in this book. A reader is not quite sure what will happen next with the storyline, but will finish with a smile on their face, looking forward to the next book in this series.

After finishing, "In the Shade of the Monkey Puzzle Tree," I felt a little sad, thinking I was saying goodbye to the series. "More to Come" . . . I hoped and then I discovered that there is one more (A Handful of Pebbles) and maybe even more to come for this series. I love the characters of this village . . . each so different . . . each story so unique from the others . . . except that all are looking for an answer to their personal dilemma. I love the philosophical bent of these books. I find myself crying and laughing . . . becoming invested in the main character, in this case Theo (a 40 year old boy who becomes a man when he runs away to Athens). When we are allowed into the brains of others we find ourselves and we learn that every choice we make is part of the chain of life on this earth. It's a beautiful Greek world, which Sara Alexi has created for us. . . warm and sunny with the occasional dark storm to shake things up a bit . . . These stories make me want to go to Greece . . . look at the beautiful scenery, feel the warm caresses of the sun and find these people, of Sara's novels, in the humanity that is there . . . but I think that I can do that wherever I am . . . the story of a

human life is never just about love, or mystery, or drama in some exotic locale . . . but about the mundane and inner dreams of every human being . .. it is about us all.

The cover is what attracted me first, the story kept me there. Theo has been under his father's thumb for forty years and he has reached his breaking point. After taking money from the till , Theo disappears into the night without a word to anyone. He lands in the big city of Athens where he proceeds to discover his real self, dreams, desires, and love. It did drag in paces but I enjoyed the escape to Greece through Alexis vivid descriptions. I will read more in this series.

I would rather give this a 3.5 review but haven't figured out how to do a half. After reading the first book in this series (The Illegal Gardener), and giving it a 5 star review, I was eagerly looking forward to this one. Unfortunately, I never really felt much connection with the main character in this one. I've asked myself if it is because in The Illegal Gardener the main character is female, and so I identified more easily. But I rather believe it's because the main character in Monkey Puzzle wasn't quite as engaging. He seemed to vacillate too easily between good guy and shady character. It is an interesting story, and worth the read, but not my favorite from Sara Alexi.

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