

Down Under

Sonia Taitz

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Taitz's style will appeal to an intellectual audience that craves more than a stereotypical rendering of ardent relationships.

In this poignant story of young love derailed, a renowned actor returns to his first flame, only to discover that romantic opportunities are more complicated the second time around. *Down Under*, by Sonia Taitz, examines the brutality of an anti-Semitic father saturated in alcohol, and the long-term consequences he inflicts upon lovers destined to be together, yet cruelly torn apart.

Timeworn and seeking answers from his past, Collum Whitsun attempts to rekindle his friendship with the girl once hungry for him and for life. Unfortunately, her conservative Jewish parents laced her with skepticism. Jude Ewington is now a middle-aged mother dissatisfied with her lifestyle. He approaches her in an undercover manner, eliciting the carefree response he desires.

Taitz explores much more than a revitalized, star-crossed affair in this innovative twist on the contemporary romance novel. Tradition meets glitz meets realism in a carefully contrived, perhaps even philosophical, look at what happens when well-intended individuals attempt to alter what cannot be changed. Family obligations and overriding maturity are rarely romantic, and this perceptive glimpse of smothered passion, along with bad character traits, places this sophisticated title soundly into the mainstream. Taitz portrays a believable scenario with just a touch of fantasy to give the plot a Cinderella coach and an attentive driver but without a particularly uplifting destination.

Jude is a typical example of a woman taught to consider the needs of others before her own, a heroine who may have once manifested a stronger ability to love herself before attempting to love another. Traditional marriage, with all the accoutrements of material comfort and superficial contentment, is an underlying motivator throughout the pages of this book. The mood is one of excitement dampened by expectation.

Sonia Taitz is a prolific and critically acclaimed novelist based in New York City. *Down Under* reaches into the realm of unforgotten desire and stirs the deepest and the sincerest emotions that remain dormant within us all.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (Spring 2015)

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