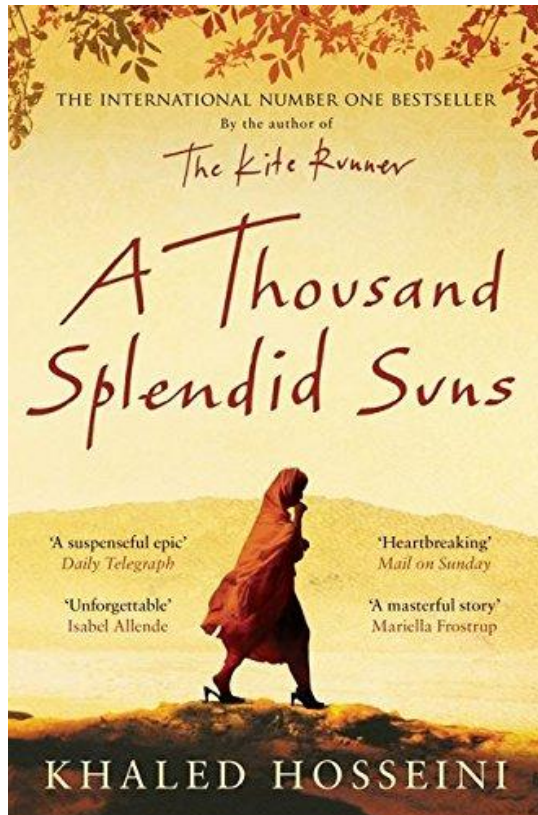


## BOOK REVIEW

**Title:** A thousand splendid suns

**Author:** Khaled Hosseini

**Genre:** Historical fiction



This beautiful piece of writing “A thousand splendid suns” by Khaled Hosseini takes you back to the olden Afghanistan. The journey of this book begins with “Mariam” and her flawed yet somehow unflawed childhood. A young little girl who has been born out of wedlock to her parents- “Nana” as she addresses her mother who also happens to be the housekeeper of her supremely rich father “Jalil”. As a result of being born out of a wedlock in a time where the mere thought of even looking at someone before getting married was considered to be a grave sin, Mariam and her mother were looked down upon by the town. In order to keep them away from the judgemental eyes of the towners or we could conclude that shoving them afar to save his own self from the disdaining, Jalil her father decided to settle them on the outskirts of the town in a small “kolba” (a small hut made up of bricks and stones). However, in all of this chaos the one thing that Mariam as a child found solace in was her beloved father. She could give up the world for him, until the day she finds out the harsh reality of him being a target of

the patriarchal norms leading him to be ashamed of accepting her in the society. This is the very first humongous blow of her life, which shatters her completely from within. The story further goes on about how the lionhearted and fearless Mariam makes a living in spite of all the struggles that life throws at her.

The second protagonist who is introduced to us in the book is the extremely bewitching “Laila”. A young girl born to a middle-class family which comprises two elder brothers and her parents- “Hakim” and “Fariba”. What makes her stand apart from others is her intelligence. Her childhood was filled with a sense of estrangement that would often come from her mother. However, at around the age of 15, she falls in love with her childhood best friend who has always been a part of her. She finds comfort, friendship, love, companionship, and everything in him. Hell breaks loose when the country goes through a war situation and Tariq is forced by circumstances to move to Pakistan. Laila as a result breaks down as nearly in the same period of time she also loses her entire family in a blast. Finding herself alone in a known yet unknown, uncertain war-like country Laila tries to float through life battling her struggles. Both of these strong-headed protagonists end up weaving their lives into each other as they grapple with the odds that life puts them through.

What makes Hosseini’s writings so outstanding is how he describes each of the deepest emotions of the character that sends down a shiver through your spine. Every emotion of the character is so well described that it almost feels like a real character standing tall in front of you. The book “A thousand splendid suns” gives you a feminist approach to the lives of these Afgan women and their battles. Some similar writings of Hosseini are “The kite runner”, “And the mountains echoed” which I would highly recommend. Signing off with a very beautiful poem from the book that struck me, which also talks a lot about the patriarchal situation even today in the 21st century “One could not count the moons that shimmer on her roofs Or the thousand splendid suns that hide behind her walls.”