

My Children, My Gold: Meetings with Women of the Fourth World

Debbie Taylor



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Debbie Taylor—novelist, traveller and author—takes us on a journey to meet seven remarkable women. In each of seven countries, she lives with one woman, learning about her work and her family, her fears and beliefs, her loves and losses. Taylor portrays them vividly: Jomuna, forced into backbreaking work hawking dried fish door-to-door, looked down upon and ostracized because she is a widow; Hua, a factory worker whose husband divorced her for giving birth to a daughter; Lydia, who followed her mother into prostitution after her husband ran off with another woman.

Varied though their stories are, these women's lives are made similar by dual enemies: poverty, which pulls them down to the lowest rungs in their societies, and patriarchy, which sabotages their attempts to climb higher. These forces bring about what Taylor calls the Fourth World: families headed by women, now comprising one-quarter of all households in the world.

Taylor tells these moving stories with great empathy and insight. Ranging from China, India, and Australia to Uganda, Egypt, Brazil, and Scotland, she brings to life the worlds these women inhabit, meticulously detailing their struggles to secure a decent life for themselves and their children.

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