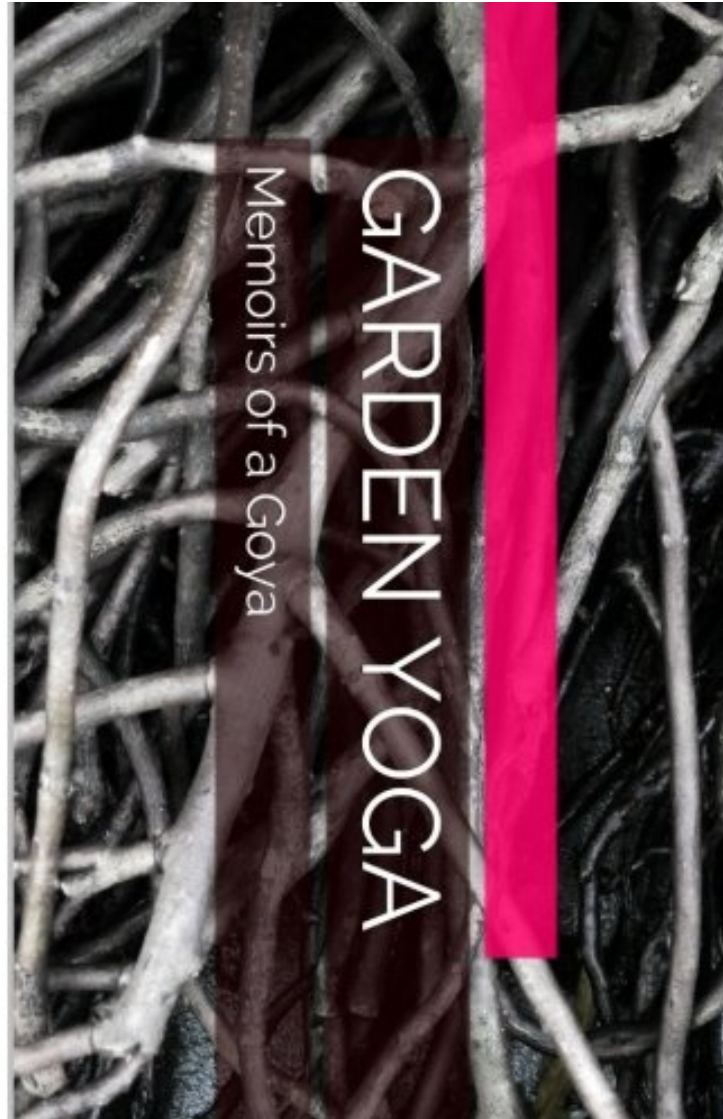


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Garden Yoga: Memoirs of a Goya

Sherrill Anne Layton

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Sherrill Anne Layton : Garden Yoga: Memoirs of a Goya before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Garden Yoga: Memoirs of a Goya:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. a unique declaration of a lifeBy Mali KayThe first few sections of the book I had to read with a dictionary at my side. Ms Layton has an admirable knowledgeof intelligent English and uses that gift all thru her story along with astrological references in her descriptions. By the middleof the book I found it easier to tie the sections together and to recognize the strength, courage and sensitivity of this womanto overcome

the obstacles life presents her with. I felt after reading it, that there is more than one book in this autobiography. Each section by itself would make an interesting book. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. So much energy! By C. R. Creative use of language and rare vocabulary range make this wild roller-coaster ride of an autobiographical sketch both fun to read (sometimes out loud laughter and sometimes bittersweet smiles) and deeply moving. And then there are quiet thoughtful moments, delicately poised. Smatterings of gardening + astrology + family dynamics are tossed together in a delicious loquacious offering. Never boring, often provocative, always sharp and witty. I loved it. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The best is yet to come! By Don Sloan If the book title Garden Yoga: Memoirs of a Soybean sounds a little obscure, get ready. The best is yet to come! This erudite piece of writing is, at turns, positively brilliant and maddeningly hard to comprehend. The author has chosen a curious form of expression that is part haiku and, in large part, poetry disguised as prose to express her thoughts to the reader. I'm not saying this form of expression is bad; just observing that one must come at this book prepared to unravel convoluted sentences steeped in imagery in order to decipher the writer's meaning. Little by little, we explore the author's curious love-hate relationship with her garden in the Tel Aviv countryside, scratched from bare earth with care and determination: "You had prepared the location and dug the week before, trying to absorb all the advice from veteran rose growers. What you do not know is that soon the plants will become an obsession, trumping coffee and even children." So far, so good. The subtle humor found in these passages is priceless. But you must sometimes enter a zen-like state in order to comprehend and appreciate it. The author emotes, sometimes with achingly painful insight: "It appeared I couldn't remember any experience for myself that did not involve another person in the lead." A divorce and a life spent adjusting as a single mother with three girls have left an indelible mark on the author, who seeks solace in her journal and copious amounts of red wine. The writing becomes clearer as we follow her journey to self-awareness amid what must have been trying times. She remembers her childhood, with laurel trees for a young girl to climb: "She was a grand tree, with a fine layer of dust in her leaves, and the scent of promises and laughter." So many good turns of phrase in this book, beautiful and evocative writing; we can't wait to see what revelations are next. A new car after trading in her beloved Subaru; memories of misspent youth "smacking our bodies into water at speedy impacts, so we could feel something, anything;" later observations on everything from her position on Arab-Israeli relations to hatha yoga. The writing finally turns more conventional and we get lovely insights into the author's personality and current predicament in modern-day Israel. I'm giving this book four stars, and that's only because I found the first section so hard to get into. On balance, it's a good read, but keep your dictionary close by; you'll need it to fully grasp some of the more complicated sections.

In this skip down the beds of her past and present gardens, Sherrill Layton offers us a humorous glimpse of her lives spent as child, sister, wife, mother, and, finally, herself. The birth of Sherrill's voice never had a forum until grief forced her to speak. Garden Yoga is a philosophical take on the seasons of our lives and our elemental evolution. Comedy and tragedy, frogs, and the incompetence of the Israeli justice system mix with earth and one woman's truth to ring out among the chrysanthemums!