



The Forgetting River: A Modern Tale of Survival, Identity, and the Inquisition

Doreen Carvajal

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The unexpected and moving story of an American journalist who works to uncover her family's long-buried Jewish ancestry in Spain.

Raised a Catholic in California, *New York Times* journalist Doreen Carvajal is shocked when she discovers that her background may actually be connected to *conversos* in Inquisition-era Spain, Jews who were forced to renounce their faith and convert to Christianity or face torture and death. With vivid childhood memories of Sunday sermons, catechism, and the rosary, Carvajal travels to the south of Spain, to the centuries-old Andalusian town of Arcos de la Frontera, to investigate her lineage and recover her family's original religious heritage.

In Arcos, Carvajal is struck by the white pueblo's ancient beauty and the difficulty she encounters in probing the town's own secret history of the Inquisition. She comes to realize that fear remains a legacy of the Inquisition along with the cryptic messages left by its victims. Back at her childhood home in California, Carvajal uncovers papers documenting a family of Carvajals who were burned at the stake in the 16th-century territory of Mexico. Could the author's family history be linked to the hidden history of Arcos? And could the unfortunate Carvajals have been her ancestors?

As she strives to find proof that her family had been forced to convert to Christianity six-hundred years ago, Carvajal comes to understand that the past flows like a river through time –and that while the truth might be submerged, it is never truly lost.

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