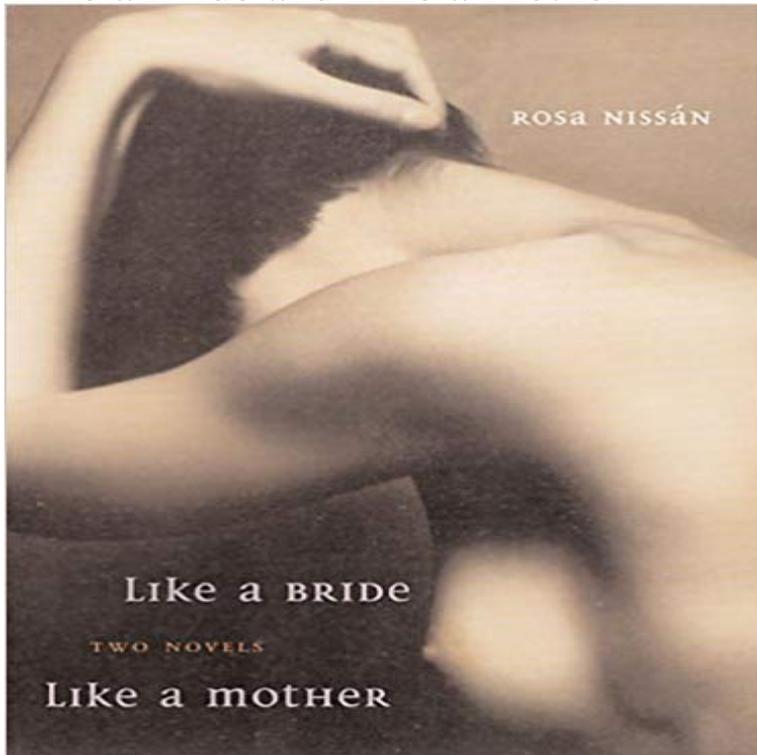


Like a Bride and Like a Mother



These two autobiographical novels lay bare the life journey of a Mexican Jewish woman reconciling herself with a Sephardic background, her parents dictates, and her husbands and families expectations. The only constant in her life is a need to find her own way, and the story of how she does so is intensely personal and yet universal in its humanness. This quest begins in Oshinicas childhood: at about age ten shes taken from the public school in Mexico City and placed in a Jewish one. There she begins to understand what it means to be Jewish. Though somewhat indifferent to Hebrew lessons, she warms to the teacher who shares experiences of the Holocaust and learns that being Jewish means being different. Oshinicas family thwarts her desire to enter the university and instead shes pushed into marriage at age seventeen. Children follow quickly, four in all, and into the 1960s Oshinica tries to be a dutiful wife and mother while continuing to be an obedient daughter. But the insular Jewish neighborhood that sheltered and defined her life is impinged upon as modernity transforms Mexico City. Seeing films like the Fellini movie 8 1/2 and experiencing a culturally changing capital city sets her on a quest for her own voice and space. Eventually she separates and divorces, supports herself as a commercial photographer, and enrolls in a creative writing course taught by Elena Poniatowska, one of Mexicoas most prominent women authors. The short pieces begun in that course evolved into these two novels. The remarkable story they tell is how Oshinicaas many, and often painful, journeys of discovery led to a personal peace.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS
Rosa Nissan lives in Mexico City and is a photographer and filmmaker. Professor Dick Gerdes teaches Spanish at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. ACCLAIM I've never met a person so natural and spontaneous. Rosa Nissan

adapts herself to life the way a plant adapts itself to the soil or the sun.-- Elena Poniatowska, author of Tinisima

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