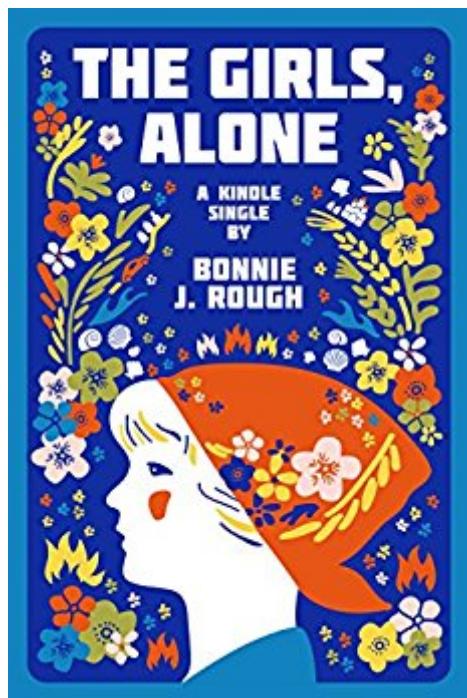


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The Girls, Alone: Six Days In Estonia (Kindle Single)



Synopsis

A resurfacing writer hits the sauna, bares it all, and learns the true meaning of saga. In her latest work, award-winning author Bonnie J. Rough separates from her family for a surprising journey into the difficult past and precarious present of Estonia, the former Soviet state of her heritage. Embarking on a journey to learn the fate of her great-great-grandmother Anna, she encounters World War II ghosts, Vikings, crones, recycled meat, a seven-ton prehistoric bull, gray hairs, and the ultimate librarian, but finds no bully bigger than Putinâ "or is it her own self-doubt?â "in an adventure that delivers surprising lessons from her foremothers about happiness, autonomy, womenâ ™s legacies and the writerâ ™s life. From the ladiesâ ™ locker room to the edges of Russia, *The Girls, Alone* is a swift ride that brings its readers to the most unexpected places and triumphantly answers its own high stakes. Bonnie J. Rough is the author of the Minnesota Book Award-winning memoir *Carrier: Untangling the Danger in My DNA*. Her essays have appeared in dozens of publications including *The New York Times*, *Huffington Post*, *The Sun magazine*, and *Brain, Child*, as well as anthologies including *The Best American Science and Nature Writing*, *Modern Love*, and *The Best Creative Nonfiction*. With past lives in Minneapolis and Amsterdam, she now lives and writes in her hometown of Seattle. Cover design by Hannah Perrine Mode.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am honored to have met Ms. Rough, but even if I hadn't, I would be eager to recommend her novella-length work. While this, generally, is a story about Ms. Rough's journey to learn more about her Estonian great-grandmother, her lush, insightful observations illustrate a universal longing for adventure as well as the desire to understand one's past (so as to fully live in the present). As I knew nothing--NOTHING--about Estonia, I was delighted to be invited into Ms. Rough's adventures. I now have a colorful sense of Estonia's earthy people, their language, the smell of the sea and the simplicity of their lives . . . and yes, the temperature of their saunas. I highly recommend this jewel of a story.

Bonnie Rough's tale of her travels and quest for deeper understanding of her Estonian roots is an honest and haunting account of what so many of us long for. We all hope that our own brief time on earth is meaningful. As we get older, we see that what defines meaningful are the intangibles we pass from one generation to the next. Bonnie's narrative style makes it easy to get lost right alongside her and Mary. And her stripped honesty comes off not as naivety, but as perhaps the only solid way to connect us all -- skin tags, mispronunciations, folds and flaws. It is a must-read for any woman who's ever wondered how the line of mothers from her own past collide into her one imperfect being.

The Girls, Alone is very well-written. The author's voice is authentic and revealing, descriptive and clear. I felt along for the ride as she and her travel companion searched for answers and exposed more questions. I was surprised by the humor and allured by the mundane aspects of their travels, encounters and locales. As an avid shvitzer, I appreciated the sauna adventures. Rough's insightful descriptions of human bodies -- her own, her companion and those they met along the way -- show how each unique vessel provides a glimpse into the collective nature of our human condition.

It was so satisfying to sit down and enter into this story. Bonnie Rough writes in such an engaging way, I found I became so immersed in the story, I forgot where I was in my own world. For me, that is the best compliment I can give the writer. Bonnie writes in an authentic, honest, and open way that is hard not to be pulled in. There are so many scenes I want to share, but I also don't want to take away your experience of the book. Just know, it's thoughtfully written, you will travel to new places, and you will always connect saunas with this book. I knew nothing about Estonia when beginning this book and feel Bonnie opened up a new place for me. Really, a lovely, enjoyable read.

I was mesmerized by the narrative descriptions of Estonia, a country and region not known for tourism. Bonnie wove her quest for family connection into the winding roads of this foreign land in a way that kept my interest and left me wanting more.

I love books when, after a page or two, you forget your reading a book as you become more and more absorbed by the story and the characters. This is one of those books. The writing is transporting and memorable; personal without being indulgent. After reading this, I feel like I've not only been to Estonia but, more importantly, inside the writer's mind. In short, this is a beautiful book that hits all the right notes - and not too many either: at just 69 pages, the length feels perfect too.

I so wanted to love this book and to really learn something from it about Estonia's difficult history as it's not a topic I've encountered often. However, I wasn't hooked by the descriptions of food and felt myself wanting to ask more questions of the people the author encounters. In the end, it's exactly what it says - 6 days in a country that is certainly difficult to navigate at times and I don't know that I ended with much more information than that with which I began.

Review: Interesting, fun read. I love a book that takes me somewhere! Estonia has been very present in our global world. I came away with so many questions & thoughts about my family history.

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