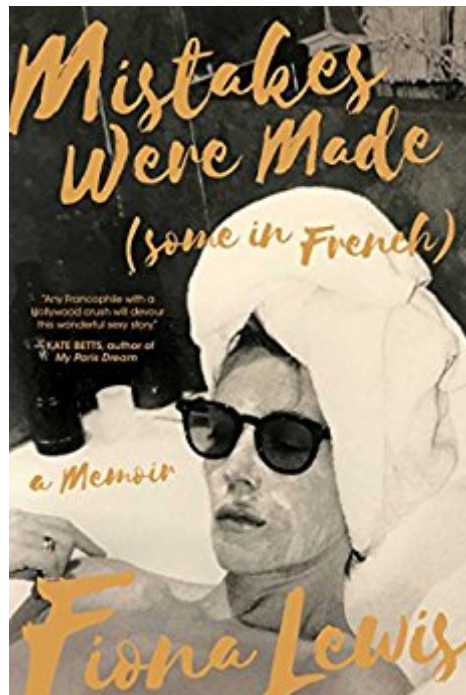




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Mistakes Were Made (Some In French): A Memoir



Synopsis

Mistakes Were Made is a revealing memoir and unexpected love story from model and actress Fiona Lewis about her journey to self-acceptance as she restores a crumbling French chateau. Alone in the French countryside, Lewis reflects on her glamorous youth across London and Paris in the 1960s, Hollywood in the 1970s, and the important, sometimes disastrous, choices she made along the way. Having lived a perfectly satisfactory life in California for over two decades, Fiona Lewis wakes up one day in her fifties and asks herself, "Is this it? Is this the existence I'm meant to have?" She can hardly complain. After all, her life has been full of adventure and privilege: London and Paris in the 1960s, Los Angeles in the heady 1970s. Now, however, she feels lost, as if she were slipping backward over the edge of a ravine, abandoned not only by her old self, but by that reliable standby, optimism. Realizing she has to find a way to reinvent herself, she impulsively buys a rundown chateau in the South of France. (Her husband is not pleased.) Alone in the depths of the countryside, she contemplates her childhood, her affairs with Roman Polanski, Roger Vadim, her years as an actress in some good and some questionable films, and her first Hollywood marriage to the damaged son of a movie star. As the renovation drags on, fighting with a band of impossible French workmen, she is forced to battle her own fears: her failure to become a real success, her inability to have children, and her persistent fear of aging. And she has to contend with her husband, who has no interest in the French countryside. In fact, he resents her obsession with France, with the house, with the renovations. The house seems to have a hold over her, and he's not wrong. He reluctantly visits and is annoyed by the cost of the renovation. Was she not content with him in LA? Why can't she just be happy? It's an age-old question and one every woman must confront, along with aging, lost love, and missed opportunities. Yet, Fiona's wit and wisdom prevail. And this provocative, brave memoir takes a stunning turn when all those unanswered questions develop into a tender and unexpected romance.

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Customer Reviews

I loved this book. I felt like I was a part of the author's adventure. It was filled with joy, success, doubt, overall struggles, but in the end a survivor who knows how to make her life the most fulfilling. I'm looking for a similar 52+ year old, soon to be empty nester fulfillment. This was an inspiration. Jump on, read, and take the ride. You'll love it.

A beautiful memoir by Fiona Lewis that is perfect pitch on London and LA in the 60s and 70s, a psychedelic leap into music, sex and drugs with their freaky highs and tightrope of anxiety - the violent rupture from the post war generation of their parents. Throughout the book the constant subtext of France weaves its way through her life like a beautiful dream - the authentic self - when she finally buys a shattered chateau in France and spends a decade restoring it, and herself. (Move over Peter Mayle!!). A stunning and moving accomplishment, that sits in its Van Gogh landscape, a masterpiece of beauty and love.

As an old friend of the author whom I had not seen for decades I had been fascinated by her fateful passion for a dilapidated castle in a remote part of France and her determination to restore the place against all odds. The tale is brilliantly told and quite impossible to put down. I bought the book and finished reading it in a single day shirking calls and putting off doing anything else until I had come to the end. In the process she tells her life story in a wonderfully unabashed fashion, confessing her failures, hard on herself, yet extremely endearing. Fiona was a great beguiling beauty, the possessor of infinite charm who bewitched all the men who met her. Yet she speaks as

if her undeniable talent and extraordinary screen presence had been almost nonexistent. As a writer she is a formidable compelling voice who make her readers share everything she feels. I heartily recommend reading this extraordinary book.

From the first lines of "Is this it? Is this the life I meant myself to have?" I was hooked. Ms. Lewis alternates between her current life renovating a dilapidated chateau in the South of France and her childhood and fascinating life as an actress in London, Paris and elsewhere in the 60's and 70's. Overall, I appreciated her wittiness and personal insights. She approaches the house renovation with the much needed patience and humor one must retain while working with sometimes temperamental Frenchmen. She's amazingly open about the successes and disappointments in her life. And she doesn't sugarcoat the ups and downs of her current marriage which I found refreshingly real. And by the end, it all comes together as a love story for her husband, for herself and for her lovely second home in France.

I've been waiting for Fiona Lewis's next book for years and was delighted to discover, via a Facebook post from her, that a memoir was finally being published. I quickly ordered a Kindle copy and jumped into bed early evening, hoping to catch up on her extraordinary life. Little did I know I would be reading, riveted, until 2:00am, then sleeping for an hour and a half, then waking up to continue reading until the book's conclusion, at dawn's early light (fittingly). Fiona's life has a cast of characters so diverse and her writing is so compelling, you feel you are living it along with her. "You'll laugh; you'll cry" is beyond trite; this life story is so unique and its rendering on the page so heartfelt, I doubt you've read anything like it. It's a one of a kind story and I cannot recommend it more highly!

Ms Lewis writes about her glamorous life with a refreshing vulnerability and depth. The writing is fluid and witty. I devoured this book in one evening with a glass of rose in hand.

A well-written account of a full and rather exhausting life, one can only imagine what was left out - dinner on a French destroyer, perhaps. Tales of the rather casual approach of the French building trades are not new - if they had been engaged for the building of St Pauls Cathedral they would probably still be ordering the bricks but the result in the Chateau does appear to have been worthwhile. I wish her and her long-suffering husband nothing but joy of it.

Loved this book! Fiona's writing is quite wonderful. Completely open, candid, entertaining and compelling. There is a lot of emotion, drama and pain but balanced by a lovely understated humour.

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