



# **The Sacred Thread: A True Story of Becoming a Mother and Finding a Family--Half a World Away**

*Adrienne Arieff*

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A touching and surprising memoir about one woman's journey to motherhood and family that illustrates the power of love and triumph of the human spirit.

After three heartbreaking losses, Adrienne Arieff thought her dreams of becoming a mother might never come true. She and her husband soon discovered, however, that parenthood was still possible, but it would require a gift from a perfect stranger, faith and determination. Half a world away, in a small village in India, Vaina was happily married with three small children, but with little means to support her family or to build a better life.

So Adrienne traveled to Anand, in a remote rural pocket of India near the Pakistani border, where the Akansksha clinic is located, to meet with Dr. Nayna Patel, an expert in surrogacy. There, Adrienne met Vaina, who courageously agreed to be a surrogate and carry Adrienne's child, an act which would, in turn, help Vaina to provide for her own children. After a course of IVF in India, Adrienne's role was just beginning in a process that as yet has no firm set of social mores. Unlike many genetic moms who return to their homes and wait for their baby to be born, Adrienne couldn't bear to have this pregnancy progress without her. She wanted to feel a connection both to her growing child and to Vaina, the woman who was offering this remarkable gift. So Adrienne decided to go back to Anand, to be Vaina's partner for the last months of her pregnancy. This choice brought its own heartaches and revelations, chief among them, how do you develop a relationship when you don't share a language or culture? But somehow these two mothers, united by a shared goal, found that within weeks, they could say anything and everything with just one look, one squeeze of the hand, one smile.

Poignant, eye-opening, and bittersweet, *The Sacred Thread* is a memoir of the astonishing journey these two young women took to create a family through international surrogacy. It is the very personal story of embarking upon this process, and shedding light on a growing medical trend that is often shrouded in misconception and prejudice. But, more importantly, *The Sacred Thread* is a tale of immersing oneself in a foreign culture and foreign land; becoming part of a group of expectant mothers, bonded by their hope for children, and following them on the euphoric highs and crushing lows of their journey; and the development of a deep bond between women who have absolutely nothing in common, except for a shared love of family and children.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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